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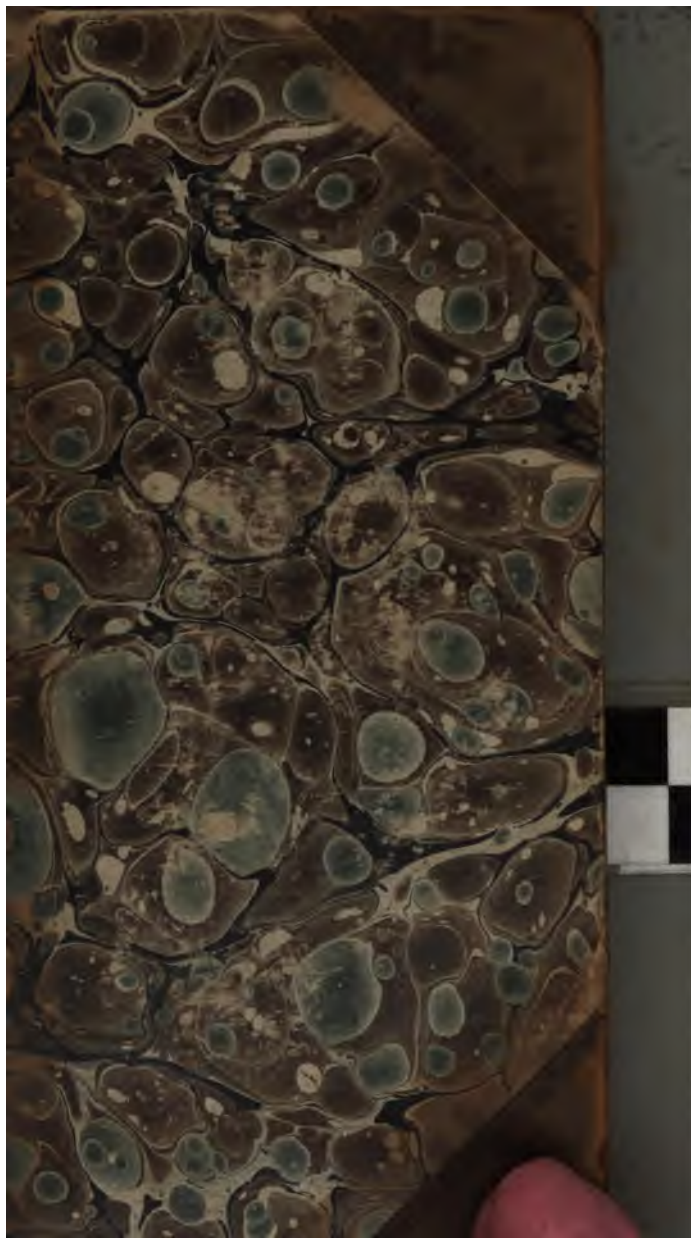
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The Latter Days.

L. B. SEELEY AND SONS, THAMES DITTON, SURREY.

The Latter Days.



By Mrs. Sherwood.

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P R E F A C E.

IN introducing 'the Latter Times' to the attention of the public, it may, perhaps, be as well to say something of the motives which induced the Author to undertake a work of so peculiar a nature.

Being two summers ago in the library of a friend, the Author was surprised to see the table covered with a variety of new publications, all referring to the signs of the times, and shewing how various passages of prophecy are fulfilled in the present state of society. That many of these small volumes displayed much learning, piety, and beauty of composition, was generally allow-

ed ; but the inquiry being made, who will read them? it was almost unanimously agreed by a large circle then present, that they would be perused only by persons already impressed with the importance of the subjects on which they treated ; and that they were not calculated to attract any description of reader not already interested in that which ought to be equally interesting to all, namely, those awful symptoms of the dissolution of society ; those wars and rumours of wars, and other appalling tokens which are continually occurring in these days, to admonish us to look to the end, and be prepared for that which may arrive.

It was then suggested that if some of the leading prophecies which had been brought forward in these graver treatises could be arranged in a more popular and attractive form ; there might perhaps be a hope, under the divine blessing, of drawing the attention of some persons who would not easily be tempted to forego amusement for edification ; and the Author being requested by the whole assembled party, to direct

the requisite attention to the subject; she lost no time in preparing the present volume, wherein, under an allegory sanctioned by Scripture, she has endeavoured to show that it behoves the members of the visible church to consider whether they are prepared for that hour, in which the master of the family will return “as a thief in the night.”

THE LATTER DAYS.

ALTHOUGH I at one time supposed that it never could have been possible for me to have put pen to paper with the view of writing my own history, or of making myself the hero of a narrative—yet the circumstance of having found myself engaged in adventures, the recapitulation of which may be the means of conveying deep instruction to the present generation, viz. to those living in the latter times, has induced me to emerge from the obscurity in which my little worth and mean parentage seemed to have involved me.

My name is NICODEMUS; I am of an ordinary family, and my birth place was in a far country; my age is now about twenty-five; and all the events which I mean to enlarge upon took place when I was in my twenty-fourth year.

I earned my living in my own country until the period spoken of above, under several masters, but not in subordinate situations, having received the best education which the place could afford, and being ready as a writer, and well acquainted with ancient tongues. Nevertheless, finding my services unprofitable, and not clearly seeing how in the long run I should be bettered by them, for my wages were such only as provided for my present wants—perishing as it were in the use of them,¹ I began to be uneasy, and to cast about as it were, for a master who would take care of me in case of the failure of health, or any other accident; and not seeing any where in all that country, a master of this description, I remained a while in an uneasy, unsettled state, in consequence of which I found my affairs falling from bad to worse from day to day.

It was just about this time, whilst feeling myself as it were without friend or means of support, that I received a letter from an uncle whom I had never seen, inasmuch as he had left his own family years before, having been called to the service of a master, of whom our people spoke lightly—and therefore we had been in the habit of considering this our relation, in the light of a branch cut from a tree, and as it were thrown to the burning. I was therefore not a little

¹ "Which all of them are to perish with the using." Col. ii. 22.

surprised when the letter, sent by a careful messenger, was put into my hands, together with that which was to defray the expense of my journey.¹

Now the terms under which this letter was couched, were those of exceeding kindness, so that whilst I read it, my heart warmed to the writer, and I instantly resolved to do that which he so earnestly recommended; for this letter was to invite, nay, to intreat, to supplicate me, as I valued my future happiness, to leave all that I had behind me, and to come forthwith to take part with him. The words of the letter were to this effect:—

‘ My master is the best of masters, his service is easy beyond that of all other masters, and his wages, with one privilege and another, are past all count, and beyond all calculation:—but lest you should be anxious concerning your reception, my nephew, I give you my word that, as long as I have lived in his blessed service, and that has been (through his goodness and through no merit of my own) from my youth up, until now, I have never seen any one who was brought to seek his service, whom he in any wise cast out.’²

¹ “Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man’s money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way, and thus did he unto them.” Gen. xlii. 25.

² “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” John vi. 37.

Such was my uncle's letter; and I being like the prodigal son in the Scriptures, feeding with the swine, and knowing not where to lay my head, it was not for me to decline such an offer as this; therefore, having made what inquiry I could respecting the way, and being little encumbered with worldly goods, I set out upon my journey.

I do not intend to trouble my reader with the history of my travels, but shall begin to tell my adventures with some particularity only just where I came in sight of the lands which belonged more especially to my uncle's master, whom henceforward I shall designate by the title of the Lord,—or my Lord,—or our Lord; for although there were other great men and people in authority dwelling in those parts, there were none, as I afterwards found, worthy to be called Lord or Master, but the one into whose service I had been invited to enter; for though the call to me had been through the medium of my uncle, he was, as I afterwards learnt, but the instrument in the hand of the Master with whom the invitation had originated, and to whom in fact I owed my promotion. Hence therefore, although I was indebted to my uncle for the readiness with which he had obeyed his Master's orders in sending for me, yet as my worthy kinsman took great pains to prove to me, I was not by any means to consider

him as my benefactor or patron;¹ seeing that the servants of the Master are, at the best, but as the moon shining with a borrowed light, and liable to variations and total eclipses, whilst the Master is as the sun shining in his strength, and shedding his glory through all creation. But although I have said that it is not my intention to give much account of my journey, yet I must not forget to say that I made it my business as I went along, to inquire what might be known respecting the Lord, in the countries through which I passed; I could however hear little of what I wanted to know. Many told me that they had never so much as heard of his name; others told me again, that they had indeed heard of him, but that he was much like others, an honourable man indeed, but not more than another, although in my uncle's letter he was described as "one of a thousand;"² and another sort laughed in my face, saying, that there never was such a person as I described; but as these last seemed to speak without understanding, I paid little regard to them,³ and so went on. At length I came, still following my uncle's direction, who had in his letter given me

¹ "Call no man your Father upon earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ."—Matt. xxiii. 9, 10.

² "My beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand."—Cant. v. 10.

³ "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."—Psalm iv. 1.

such marks for my road as I could not mistake,¹ to the borders of my lord's territory, or rather to the borders of that portion thereof, which he had set apart for his own peculiar pleasure and service :² and truly, when I first obtained the prospect thereof, I could almost have felt that I was like Moses viewing the land of Canaan from the top of Pisgah, so fair and ravishing was the sight ; for there was nothing to be seen to the right and left, and as far away as the eye could reach, but mountains and hills rising one above another, until those which were most remote, and which lay in the quarter of the east, were so high as to be covered with eternal snow, some of the sparkling summits of which were seen above the clouds, and seemed as if unattainable by the foot of man ;³ but the nearer hills being lower, were covered with fine trees, and were running down with brooks and fountains of waters. It was indeed a land of brooks gushing forth in the vallies ;⁴ and there were rivers wandering among the meadows, and large pastures abounding with flocks and herds,⁵ and fragrant brakes, and copses

¹ " The wayfaring men though fools shall not err therein."—Isaiah xxxv. 8.

² " My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill."—Isaiah v. 1.

³ " As the mountains are round about Jerusalem"—Psalm cxxv. 2.

⁴ " A land of brooks."—Deut. viii. 7.

⁵ " For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." Psalm l. 10.

filled with multitudes of birds, whose thrilling notes of joy¹ filled the ear, and orchards of fruit trees, and fields rich with all manner of grain; and all these things burst upon my sight, as I might say at once, as I emerged from a narrow strait, or pass of the road. Surely, I cried, I am come to a fair land, and fallen into a goodly heritage; and if in the countries which are very far off, they deny the existence of the lord of this land, or mock at his name, there will be none here but such as will be ready to speak well of him, seeing how plenty is spread through all his domains, and how every man might dwell here under his own vine, and his own fig-tree, and enjoy a peace which the servants of other masters can but ill conceive. So I hastened onward, and in measure as I proceeded, other objects opened to my view. I saw many pretty cottages and little dwellings perched here and there on the sides of the hills, alone and single, or in groups and clusters, and soon afterwards the towers of the castle or principal seat opened unto me, being, as I saw on a nearer approach, an edifice composed of strong timbers curiously wrought and fashioned, having many windows and various galleries of lattice² work, the foundations being of

¹ "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Cant. ii. 12.

² "He looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattices." Cant. ii. 9.

stone, for the house stood upon a platform of rock-work,¹ and behold the sun was shining on some parts of this mansion, which I shall henceforth call the castle, and it looked exceedingly handsome, set as it was in beautiful gardens, with trees of lign-aloe, and cedar; but between me and the castle was a sort of little town or village, and I must needs pass through this town, for it lay directly in the road; there was, however, an air of comfort shed over the place as I saw it from the distance; so my spirits were high, and I thought all was smooth before me, and all troubles at an end;² and in this temper I walked on, full of anticipations of the comfortable life I was to lead with my uncle, in the service of the best of masters; nevertheless, as I went on, I was struck with one or two circumstances which indicated less attention to order in the management of the estate than I had expected to find in the domain of such an one as the lord. I had, indeed, built my expectations very high, and had filled myself with the notion, that as soon as I should set my foot on my lord's land, I should find every thing arranged and ordered in such a

¹ "Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner." 1 Peter ii. 6.

² "And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong."—Psalm xxx. 6, 7.

way as that the most fastidious person should have no fault to find. Yet I cannot now say whereon I built my expectations; surely not from any expressions used in my uncle's letter, but (as he made it to appear afterwards to me) from notions of my own hastily taken up. I have often since considered, it is surprising how apt we are when first meditating upon any new plan of life, to go beyond what we have grounds for, and thus very often to prepare stumbling blocks for our own feet: ¹ accordingly, when my uncle had in his letter invited me to enter into the service of the lord, assuring me that he was indeed the best of masters, and one whose wages were beyond all price, ensuring in the long run the promotion of his servants beyond their most warm and sanguine expectations, for this was the very sense of his words, what must my busy fancy add to these promises, but a variety of present advantages and privileges, of which never a word had been spoken in the letter, for my uncle had made no promises whatever of any thing to be enjoyed just then, unless it were that sort of enjoyment which a man may derive from the assurance that his future concerns will be well

¹ "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Matt. xiii. 20, 21.

looked to; ¹ a sort of enjoyment, which after all cannot well be too highly rated:—however, as I before said, my imagination had made itself very busy, and I was expecting things incompatible with the present state of man on earth; neither had I then discovered that which afterwards appeared, viz. that an enemy had invaded the lord's territory, and like a wild bear of the wood had broken down the fences, and brought confusion where order should have reigned; but more of this hereafter.

So I proceeded along the way, and passing between certain little farms and tenements ranged on this side and on that side of the road, I was continually offended with the unskilfulness of many things I saw, ² and truly I could not help thinking, that much more would be owing to the natural fertility of the land, if the people were not altogether starved, than to any great wisdom of the farmers; and they were slovenly too, letting the fences all run to ruin, and permitting the corn fields to be choaked with weeds, and, as far as I could judge, paying little heed to the signs of the sky; for although the morning was hot, and many of the fruits ready for gathering, I saw few

¹ "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John xiv. 27.

² "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." Luke xvi. 8.

labourers at work,¹ though there were several lounging at the cottage doors.

Nay, I was so much surprised at this, that I called across a slip of a field to a man who was walking up and down with his hand in his bosom,² saying, 'Friend, why are not you at work this fine morning, gathering in of your good things?' but he took no heed of my question, only bidding me mind my own affairs; and so far he was right, I had matters enough of my own to attend to, and had no need to meddle with other people's concerns. So I went on and came into the precincts of the village, which was without wall, and where I was not a little astonished by all I saw; for instead of the neat and orderly appearance which, as I before said, might have been expected within the domains of such an one as my lord, there was not only a general appearance of slovenliness about some dwellings, but of much sordid poverty about others; and again there was as great a pretension to show and ostentation in one or two more, as if all the resources of the place had been spent on two or three homesteads, to the manifest diminution of the comforts of the rest, I had seen things of this kind in foreign lands, and I

¹ "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." Matt. ix. 37.

² "The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom, it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth: the sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason." Prov. xxvi. 15, 16.

was well aware that whilst the world lasted in its present state, there must be different grades in society;¹ yet I had expected, I must confess, to have found things better ordered under the rule of such a man as I wished to find my future lord. But I had worse things than these to encounter, for as I went on further into the village, I fell in with many of the inhabitants, and also heard strange talk, for one was abusing another; one was endeavouring to overreach another; a third was cursing and swearing, and many were jeering, and scoffing, just as one might have expected in any other place where any ordinary master was at the head of affairs; or, as I was going to say, where there was no master at all in the case; but there I should have been wrong, for a society cannot hold together at all, without some sort of law, and if there were not a sort of method in men's madness, there would be no such thing as living at any rate, for creatures constructed as we are could not exist in a state of absolute chaos.

Well, but thought I, as I walked sadly forwards, along the village street, having the houses on my right and my left, and the castle gate right before me at the end of a long avenue; how does all this agree with my uncle's account of things? Did he not talk of a good master,

¹ "The poor will never cease out of the land, therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide to thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." Deut. xv. 11.

and a wise master, and of a powerful master, and of one who is able and willing to serve and protect his faithful followers? how comes it then that he should allow of such disorders in his domains, and that he should permit his vassals to brawl in the streets, and to scoff at that which every man must know to be decent and proper? But, added I, speaking to myself, I will presently know the rights of this, and forthwith I turned in at the gate of a house of entertainment, which stood on the way side, and seeing a parcel of men sitting on a bench, I stepped up to them and said, 'My friends, will you please to tell me to whom does this castle belong which I see just beyond?' 'Are you come so far, and don't you know?' replied a man, who seemed to be the chief on the bench, and forthwith he began to laugh, and the laugh went round, whereat I was well nigh thrown off my guard; however, I repeated my question, on which one of the company answered and said, that the castle and all the neighbouring domain, nay, for all he knew, many a good acre beyond what the naked eye of any man could reach unto, was said to belong to a person whom I knew to be the same mentioned by my uncle.

Well, I replied, 'What may the character of your lord be, does it answer to what I have heard?'

'You must first tell us what that may be,'

replied the man, looking at his fellows under his eye-lids, with a sort of side glance which I by no means liked, 'before I can answer the question.'

'Why,' replied I boldly, for I was nettled at the manners of the man, 'I have heard that he is one of ten thousand.'

This brought a laugh, which ran round the bench again; and then the landlord coming out across the yard with a fresh tankard, what had passed was repeated to him, whereupon he called up a grave face, and turning to me asked, 'What my business might be at the castle?'

I mentioned my uncle's name, and said whence I had come in search of him, and how I had been invited to enter into the service of the Lord.

'Aye!' returned the landlord, with a look which I could not understand, 'so, it seems you have had a call, and there is no question but you will find your profit in obeying it; your uncle has a good berth there no doubt, and may speak well of the bridge which carries him over.'

'Meaning his lord,' I replied; 'I hear that he is the best of masters.'

'Some find their interest in serving him,' replied the landlord; 'and I have no doubt but that your uncle has turned his services to good account.'

'There is no question of that,' replied the first speaker, i. e. the man at the head of the bench, 'for things are not carried on now as in times

past, when it was as much as a man's life was worth to declare himself on the side of him that some call Master.'

He was going on when the host began to whistle, which was a token, I supposed, that enough had been said. *Then*, turning again to me, he remarked, 'Well, my friend, if your credentials are true, you have nothing to do but to walk on and you will come to the castle ere long; but you will not find your lord, as you call him, in the way, he has been gone from here I don't know how many years, and those must be wiser than I who can say when he will come back again.'¹

'Gone,' I said; 'gone!' for I was all amazement, 'and shall I not see him at the castle?'

'Aye,' replied the first speaker, 'that is what doctors differ upon: that he is not there now is certain enough; but there are some who will tell you that he will be there anon—to-morrow—perhaps to-day—perhaps the next moment;—is it not so, landlord? But, for my part, I am not one of those who look for prodigies.'

'Well,' replied the host, 'time will shew.'

'The master gone!' I repeated, for I was sadly put out with this news, 'and no certainty respecting the time of his return; this is bad for me;

¹ "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." ² Peter iii. 4.

but no doubt he has left those behind him who will see his orders executed.' And then I proceeded to ask concerning the persons who were in command during the master's absence.

The host replied, 'There were those at the head of affairs who were quite as capable of managing matters as the master himself;' and as he spoke he winked at the person at the head of the bench as much as to say, You understand what I mean; but still continuing to address me, he went on as follows:—'The present head of the household is Mr. Fitz-Adam, the steward, or intendant as some call him; he has been master here time out of mind, and the people for the most part desire no better than that he should continue to rule to the end of the chapter. And then, in the female department, there is Madame le Monde; she is a foreigner.¹ they say, and therefore keeps her foreign title; she is housekeeper, and carries the keys, as you will see, hanging by a golden hook at her girdle; and to my mind, she is as comely a woman, and as agreeable withal, as any my eyes ever chanced to light upon. Then there are two principal chaplains in the house, that is father Peter and the doctor; some say, that the father is got childish and in his dotage, though he is not so old as the doctor; but be that as it may, he is not the man just now

¹ "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." John i. 10.

for such a one as you, young master, who no doubt wish to get on in the house, to be paying your court to, for he is losing ground fast ; and few of the good things which are to be got by serving him you call Master, are now at his command. On the other hand, the doctor is rising, they say, as fast as the old chaplain falls ; and though he is no favourite of mine, yet I am much mistaken if he does not know on which side of the haunch the fat lies, as well as any man in the whole household. Well, but to return to the steward and housekeeper—I promise you that every thing is well and handsomely managed under their direction ; and I do not see why your uncle, and some others in his train (for he is a sort of leader amongst one set) should be always speering and spying and looking up towards the hills, from whence, as he pretends, his master will come.’¹

‘I cannot understand all this,’ I replied ; ‘if my uncle loves his master, surely it is no wonder if he should wish to see him ; and although those that rule under him may be very worthy, yet after all the true owner of the land, and true Lord² of the people, must have more interest in it and them, than strangers can have.’

¹ “I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.” Psalm cxxi. 1.

² “I am the good shepherd : the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth : and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.” John x. 11, 12.

‘Well, well,’ returned the host, somewhat peevishly, ‘one man may have one opinion, and another another, thoughts are free; but if you are bound for the castle, young man, I have shewn you the way, and you had as good be going forward; when you get there you will see how the land lies; and as the old saying is, Least said, is soonest mended.’

Thus we parted; and I went straight along the street towards the castle gates, which fronted me as I stepped out from the inn-yard.

The little discourse, however, which I had heard by the way, had put many perplexing thoughts in my head; neither could I make out anything either from what I heard, or from what I continued to see as I proceeded, for there was this peculiarity in all which I observed as I went on, viz.—that as every thing looked fair and well at a distance, whether it were a thatched cottage with its rustic porch projecting into the street from beneath the shade of a tree,—or a garden set with flowers and fruit trees,—or it might be a group of children playing on a bank, or what not; whenever I drew near to any of these things, I saw something I did not like in them:—either the house was ruinous,—the garden slovenly,—or the persons ill-conditioned. Nothing that I saw seemed to give evidence of care, or order, or cleanliness; in short, there seemed a sort of blight, natural or moral, on every thing

that met the eye.¹ Neither was the ear more satisfied in this place than the other senses, for as I passed along, I was addressed by many harsh voices ;—the children calling rudely after me and inquiring what brought me there, and the women mocking at me from the door-steads, because the cut of my coat varied from that commonly worn in those parts. Such, indeed, as I afterwards found, had been prescribed by the housekeeper to the servants ; for this same housekeeper is, as I afterwards had reason to know to my cost, one who looks into every thing with a minuteness and activity which would do her credit if her cause were better : but of this more in the sequel. So I passed on through this village, and soon came to the gate at the end of the avenue, and found myself within the more immediate domain of the castle, and then I had again occasion to observe that although the place abounded with all which might make a residence desirable, there wanted not the same tokens of waste, destruction, and carelessness of the good things which the soil produced, which I had observed elsewhere.

Coming at length near to the castle, and seeing two ways, one of which led to the front of the house, and the other into the outer courts or

¹ "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens...For we that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened." 2 Cor. v. 1, 4.

offices, I thought it behoved me to take the latter, and soon found myself among the stables; and I promise you that they were uncommonly spacious and handsome, being prepared for the convenience of many horses;—for as I afterwards learnt, the steward, who, like most of his description, is a person of no small consequence in his own eyes, affects much state in his horses and equipages.¹ Moreover, there were many grooms, as might be expected, in the stable-yards,—some being busied in one way, and some in another, whilst a third sort were lounging and basking themselves as if they had nothing to do but to look on upon what others were about;—but all I saw wore a sort of livery as belonging to one master, and I, being a sort of Johnny Newcomb amongst them, took it for granted that the livery they wore was that of my uncle's master, even of him of whom I had heard so inviting a report, viz. the true lord and proprietor of the place.

Now it was not to be supposed that I should be allowed to pass without comments; accordingly, one or two of the young men called out to me as I was proceeding quietly forward, and bringing me to a stand, would have it that I should answer the questions usually put to strangers, viz.—Whence I came? Whither I was going? And what might be my business?

¹ “With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets.” Ezek. xxvi. 11.

‘I am come,’ I replied, ‘from a distant country; my place of destination is the castle before me; and my business is with such-a-one, naming my uncle.’

I saw the smile go round as I spoke; and one of the young men replied—‘And so you are our old secretary’s nephew, (my uncle, I should have said before, held the place of scribe or secretary in his master’s family) and I suppose you are come to lend him a hand in his profitable labours. He is a faithful and godly person—that uncle of your’s, young man, though some of us perhaps do not give him all the credit for his meritorious conduct which he deserves. You are a happy lad to have such a patron!’

I did not then understand, that irony was a very favourite figure of speech in the castle, and therefore took all this fine oration in favour of my uncle in the very letter, rather than in the spirit, and in consequence replied in all simplicity,—‘I was delighted to hear that my venerable kinsman bore so excellent a character, and was held in such high estimation in his Lord’s family.’ I almost wonder that this was permitted to pass as it did by the saucy grooms, and that it did not provoke any thing more than a renewal of merriment; but my uncle was so much and so universally respected in the family, that scarcely any one dared to speak openly of him with irreverence, and thus I was permitted to pass on,—one of the

young men pointing out to me the way I should take to the servant's hall. So I went my way, my mind being by this time in a strange state of confusion, yet I did not observe anything very particular as I got more in among the offices, excepting a number of dogs which came baying and barking unhospitably enough upon me, and several groups of boys playing at pitch and toss, and a loud objurgatory and ranting noise, which proceeded from a kitchen, near to which I passed, and where I saw a company of women busy with culinary occupations.¹ So I came to the door of a great hall which opened into the inner court, and there I perceived several serving men sitting at a long table, regaling themselves with bacon and flaggons. At this door I stood till I was seen by the company within; and then an elderly man, whom I afterwards knew to be a sort of bailiff, or under-steward, called to me, and asked my business.

'My business, sir,' I replied, 'is with the secretary;—Is he within? might he be spoken with?'

I observed a sort of sneer again on the face of these men as I spoke, for dull as I was in understanding the true state of things, it was not possible for me, after so many experiences of the same kind, not to remark that the mention of my

¹ "Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flock." Ezek. xxxiv. 3.

uncle's name had excited a sneer on the lip of every one, before whom I had spoken it.¹ However before the bailiff could reply, a young man came forward of a very pleasing appearance, and undertook to lead me whither I wished to go; whereupon all the others were silent, and I was led through the hall along several passages, such as are commonly seen in large houses, to a door, which, being opened, I saw before me my venerable uncle seated at a table, with his pen in his hand, writing with much assiduity, and as one deeply interested in his work. As I pronounced my name, and advanced towards him, he hastened to meet and embrace me, calling me his son, and congratulating me on my entrance into the service of the best of masters. 'The best of masters' thought I, what am I to make of this; 'who is to be my master here, and what sort of fellow-servants am I to have?' My uncle then gave orders that water should be brought in order that I might be washed,² serving me with his own hand; and this being done, he caused refreshment to be set before me by the young man spoken of above, for I afterwards found, this young man, although he had other busi-

¹ "Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us." Psalm xlv. 13.

² "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter iii. 21.

ness in the house, loved my uncle, and had a delight in doing him service; and my uncle encouraged this regard of the young man towards him, often taking occasion to say to him, 'Well my son, when will your mind be brought to leave your present employments for a better service?' By which I was made to understand, that this youth was in the condition of one who is "halt-
ing between two opinions," but I shall have occasion to speak more largely of him hereafter. So we dined,—after which, my uncle fell into a discourse which lasted till bed-time, for I was to have a little chamber within the parlour,¹ near to another thus situated, which was occupied by the old gentleman himself, and it was on occasion of my uncle saying to me, 'You may rest there, Nicodemus, with little interruption from the noise of the family,' that brings me to the point where I needed satisfaction. 'My good sir,' I said, 'you speak of the noise of the family, and in truth, what I have seen of this household, as I passed through the offices, but ill accords with what you say of the master and lord of these lands; if the lord is such as you declare him to be, why does he not rule his people with more diligence, and make his law more effective in producing order?' And then I went on to say how disappointed I had been in finding things so

¹ "Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."—Psalm xxxi. 20.

different in my lord's heritage from what I had been led to suppose from his letter.

'And what, my nephew,' replied the old gentleman, 'what did I lead you to believe, in the letter of invitation which I sent you? Did I promise you present enjoyment, or a deliverance from present trouble? I held out to you, indeed, the assurance that your future welfare should be secured for you, and that in the long run the privilege of this service should be past all count or calculation, for "faithful is he that has called you," but I promised no present exemption from pain. Reconsider the letter,' he added, 'if you have it with you, and if the master seems to have failed in aught that he hath already promised, then count me a liar and unfaithful, and one who has not rightly interpreted the message which he gave me to deliver; for I am only as an hinge or joint in this affair, and if the door turneth not well on the hinge, then is the hinge rusty, and good only to be cast away. Yet I trust I have not so done my lord's errand, as to have led you into an error, Nicodemus. I rather fear that the desires of your heart have deceived you, and that you have not yet been brought to consider all things of little importance in comparison with your well-being at a future period; but such are not the true servants of the lord, for they count the present things of little value, and desire only to be prepared

to meet him with joy when he shall return to his house.'¹

Whilst my uncle thus spake to me, I turned to the letter in question, and conned every word of it, and wondered how I had been led to see the promise of present prosperity and advancement in any part thereof; and no doubt my altered looks betrayed my feelings on this second perusal, for as I closed the letter, and put it back into my breast, my uncle remarked, 'You see, nephew, that I have said nothing in that epistle respecting present enjoyment any further, than as proceeding from that peace of mind, which every man must experience when he feels that his future concerns are provided for, by one that is wiser than himself, and one in whom he may have perfect dependence. Such is my master; I have lived in his service these many years, and never have I seen one confounded, who has put his trust in him.'² 'But Sir,' I said, 'you only perplex me the more by what you say. Is not this fair estate, with this castle, and its parks, and fields, and all that

¹ "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Phil. iii. 8.

² "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire into his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me: he shall set me up upon a rock." Psalm xxvii. 3—5.

appertain thereunto, belonging to your master ; and if so, why can he not, and does he not, provide for the present, as well as the future comfort of his people ; for I am told that he is not here, and has not been here this many a day, and that those whom he has left in charge, lord it over his possessions, and manage every thing their own way. Now pardon me, my esteemed uncle, but the truth is this, that I do not understand how it can be consistent with a good master to act thus towards his people ; for thus much have I gathered on my way, that the steward who rules here under the master is more thought of than the master himself ; and that every body thinks it right to pay court to the housekeeper, although she is not even a country-woman of my lord.'

'Neither have you heard one word more than the truth,' replied my uncle, 'as it respects the assumption of the intendant, and the honour paid to the housekeeper ; for I can tell you much more than what you have heard, and yet with all this, you have not got the right end of the clue.' And then my uncle went on to state how the matter really lay. 'This estate,' said he, 'from time immemorial, has been the property of the Lord ;—the letters of my Lord, which you have been called into this service to copy and disseminate among the people, speak in language most beautiful of the early times in which our Lord ruled with undisturbed sway in these lands. This place was

at that time as a garden of delights: there was nothing therein but what was very good ;¹ and the Lord was as a brother and a friend to the inhabitants of the land, walking with them in the shade of their woods, and speaking with them face to face. But they rebelled against him, and admitted one into their hearts and affections, who had been his enemy from the beginning;² and he beguiled them with lies and deceit, for he is a liar, and the father of lies ; and they rebelled against the Lord, and sold themselves to the enemy, and were as persons lost and undone for ever ; and thus time went on, and their case appeared to be without hope, and there is no doubt but that the enemy triumphed and counted on this land and the people residing thereon as his own for ever. Nevertheless the Lord had not forgotten them, neither had the King who is the Father of the Lord ; for our Lord is a King's son, nay, a King himself, and the King of Kings, being one in power, authority, and majesty with his father, although according to the old feudal laws, it behoved him to do his father homage, nay, and himself homage too, for this his inferior principality, which he purchased from the enemy under this charter, to wit, that he was to become a servant, and, as it were, a vassal

¹ " And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen. i. 31.

² " He that committeth sin is of the devil ; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John iii. 8.

to his own princely authority. But, as I was saying,' continued my uncle, 'the Father of our Lord, viz. the King of Kings, as we find in the letters of which I spoke before, had ever borne in mind the afflictions of the miserable people of this land, and had prepared a ransom for them which was to be paid by his Son; and in order for the payment of which, it behoved this last to leave his glorious state, and become as one of us,¹ and in that lowly estate, being as a servant² rather than a prince amongst us, he paid our ransom and set us free, and thus we are his possession, first by right, and next by conquest, and anon we shall be his in his visible presence, by a union as close as that of the members of one body to the head.³ Nevertheless, for the trial of our faith and patience, and that we may all by experience know what the thralldom is from which he has redeemed us, he has judged it right in his great wisdom to leave us for a time under the visible government of the prince, his enemy; for, as he has said, My people have made to themselves another Lord, let them bear his yoke awhile, and bend to

¹ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

² "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." John ii. 17.

³ "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Ephes. v. 30.

his dominion—let them bend till their shoulders are galled—let them wear his livery till it fall in rags from their backs; and then perhaps they will hearken unto my call, for “my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

‘But,’ added my uncle, ‘I should tell you that although the government in this place is not carried on according to the Lord’s principles, and though the rule is not in the hands of his servants, yet that since the coming of the Lord to redeem the people, there has been always in this house a sort of imperium in imperio, or kingdom within kingdom; or I should say, a party, which, although seldom having any of its members placed in a seat of government, has always exercised so strong an influence, that the adverse party are obliged more or less, to accommodate themselves to what they call their prejudices; hence this castle is always called by the name of the Lord, and all the public deeds and papers are made out in that name. The steward as yet, has never dared to do other than call him Master, and make some sort of reference to his authority, even when doing the things which he knows to be most contrary to his will. Formerly, that is before the Lord paid the price of our redemption, this was not the case with us, for then the enemy was more openly acknowledged; but since that time, the followers of the Master have always had more or less influence in the house; though as to

making a head and obtaining any thing like rule or power in this place, we have not attempted it, or if we have attempted it, we have always failed,¹ and for this reason, that it is not the time for the revelation of the Master's kingdom. It is to be a hidden and a secret one for the present, and we are commanded in the letters to be patient and submissive to the powers that be ;² being content with that we have, and waiting quietly for the glory and happiness which is promised to us when the Master comes,³ for we know that our Master lives and reigns, and that we shall see him and stand before him even in these our servants' garbs.⁴ And you, my nephew, he added, you will then be among the number of those blessed ones, since you have been called to the service of the Lord, and have been set down in the Master's roll of his servants ; hence I fear not but that you will be helped to do that which is pleasing in his sight.'⁵

My uncle then proceeded to inform me, that

¹ " For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." 2 Cor. x. 4.

² " Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God." Rom. xiii. 1.

³ " And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter v. 4.

⁴ " For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job xix. 26.

⁵ " According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. i. 4.

although the Lord's party had no visible head in the house, yet that they were not without a friend who secretly comforted and directed them in all cases of trial. 'This person,' said he, 'whom we call the interpreter, is one of whom I dare not lightly speak, inasmuch as his power, his glory, and his honour are equal with that of the King of Kings. He knows all things belonging to the Lord, and is ready to explain the written will of the Master, to all who are made willing to be instructed.¹ But,' continued my worthy relation, 'inasmuch as this holy person is spoken of in my Lord's letters, I refer you to these for a further account of him, lest by using my own words I should darken counsel without knowledge. Nevertheless, I wish to tell you that this sacred interpreter is shy of the pomp or assemblies of men, and seldom mingles his counsels where there is a display of human wisdom.'

My uncle then proceeded to speak of the manner in which the Lord had been treated, when he had last appeared among the people, telling him they abused him, and covered him with injuries :²

¹ "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever ; even the Spirit of truth ; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John xiv. 15—17.

² "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave

and having dwelt on this subject till the tears had gushed from his eyes, he suddenly as it were changed his strain, and spoke of that which was his hope and consolation, viz. the return of the blessed Lord in the latter days; 'and these' continued he, 'are the latter days which are come upon us; and these are the signs which are given to the faithful by which they may know them; for, whereas in old age, the natural body gives evidence of speedy dissolution, the various members refusing to perform their office; so in the old age of the body politic, the signs of dissolution are equally apparent, and the members no longer holding to the head, the whole body begins to fall to pieces, and to dissolve into distinct and separate atoms; then is corruption engendered, and the political death is completed: and see we not all these things at hand, men begin with denying the Lord that bought them, and next they rebel against delegated authorities, and these things being come, we see the signs of the end of the present dispensation.¹'

'Then,' replied I, 'it is to be understood, that the Lord has in some sort resigned his authority in this place to his enemy for a while, in order that his own servants may learn to know the

he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John i. 10, 11, 12.

¹ "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Tim. iv. 1.

difference between his dominion, which is that of love and kindness; and that of the enemy, which is the reverse.'

'Understand,' replied my uncle, 'that it was the deliberate act and deed of the vassals to sell themselves to another Master; and that it was also by the free-will and pleasure of the Lord that the means were provided for their salvation from the final and terrible consequences of their rebellion; but, inasmuch as if he that is the Lord, had chosen immediately to have removed every inconvenience consequent upon our rebellion, for we have all been partakers therein, we should not only not have known by experience the nature of the slavery from which we have been rescued, but should also have wanted that exercise of faith and patience, which is one means used by superior wisdom to prepare us for the glory and happiness which is to come.'

'But,' said I, 'I do not understand wherefore I, who have been called to the service of the Master in these latter days, am to suffer for offences committed before I was born.'

'Because,' replied my uncle, 'you are a descendant of those who rejected the Lord; you are of that rebellious race, and when you know yourself, you will understand, that if it depended on you only, you would be as forgetful of the Lord and as prone to all evil from henceforward even unto the end, as you have been from the period

of your birth until the moment in which you received the call to his service.'

'This is what I cannot understand,' I replied.

'Which proves,' returned my uncle, 'that those exercises of faith and patience to which you will be called in this house are necessary, in order to bring you to a knowledge of yourself, and to a proper sense of what the Lord has done for you. Moreover, I tell you that the Lord will not return to take things into his own hands, until every individual who shall be called into his service has endured such exercise under the present state of things, as shall be thought right by the Master; and until then, that is, until the last of these is brought into a state of preparation for the glorious appearance which we are admonished to expect, we must remain in a sort of bondage under our present rulers; ¹ and then, and not till then, will the Master come. Though the day and the hour is not known to any one, ² yet we are assured, that whenever it does come, it will be a day of rejoicing to all those amongst us who have been brought to place our trust in him, and in him only. We know that we are his, and that our redemption has been paid, and that we shall be accepted through him; and therefore we wait in hope, and trouble ourselves no farther with the

¹ "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." *Romans viii. 22.*

² "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." *Matt. xxv. 13.*

concerns of this household, than as they retard or promote as far as we can see the advancement of his kingdom in the hearts of the servants.'¹

I was not in a state of mind to receive all these things at that time. I was chafed and angry, because I was not to have my good things immediately, and I replied with irritation; 'and so, whilst the Lord delayeth his coming, we are to submit to those who are his enemies, who have usurped an authority not their own, and whom we cannot respect because they are usurpers.' 'Those,' replied my uncle, 'viz. the intendant² and the housekeeper, with others whom you will know by and by, originally ruled with an authority usurp-

¹ "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do."
1 Thess. v. 1—11.

² "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." John xviii. 36.

ed ; but inasmuch as the master does not choose to exercise his power to displace them, but permits them to keep their seats of authority, we may understand that those amongst us who really love our Lord and look for his coming may consider it our duty (being admonished to that effect) to behave ourselves quietly, and to submit in all things lawful to the powers that be,¹ having a better hope for the future, and knowing that all will be set right when our master comes :² and thus speaking, he took from a shelf which was near at hand a curious old volume, fastened with silver clasps, and he informed me that this volume included his master's letters, and communications to his servants, sent from time to time by different hands, which letters as he said contained every thing that was necessary for the comfort and admonition of his servants under every possible circumstance of life ; every word included in the volume being perfectly true, and more precious than much fine gold : and turning over the leaves, he shewed me certain passages in which the Master directed his servants to submit to all such as were actually at the head of affairs, in all things not contrary to his commands.³ He then pre-

¹ " Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

² Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear ;

sented me with a small copy of this volume, bidding me to carry it with me, and make it the rule of my life ;¹ after which he proceeded to let me into something of the private history of the household.

‘ This place,’ said he, ‘ has been set apart as it were for the especial residence of the Master’s people from time immemorial, although it has undergone many changes. Neither has the building ever been completed according to the Lord’s plan ; but some have added to it and some have pulled down ; and some have defaced it, and some have new painted and varnished it, and so changed and altered it, that scarcely any of the original building is now visible, being as it were entirely encircled by the additions which have been made to it ; but inasmuch as these additions are chiefly of dried lath and untempered

not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently ? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called : because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps : who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth : who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not ; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously : who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness : by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray ; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”
Pet. ii. 17—25.

¹ “ Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ? by taking heed thereto, according to thy word.” Psalm cxix. 9.

mortar,¹ they require constant repair, and are liable to fail continually, and more so, especially because they do not stand upon the foundation which is of rock, but rather on the sand,² which is on the side of the rock.'

The gardens too which surround the house were laid out by the Lord, and were exceedingly beautiful at the first, till the other party cut down to the root many of the trees³ of the Lord's planting, and introduced others of a different nature, and thus the heritage of the Lord was spoilt.⁴ Moreover, Madame le Monde caused the fountain which watered the garden, to be directed otherwise than the Lord had ordered, and so mis-managed matters that it is now muddy and foul, and of little benefit to the plants.⁵ Now it seems that it was quite contrary to all expectations that Mr. Fitz-Adam⁶ should have seized on the

¹ "Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace, and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar." Ezekiel xiii. 10.

² "And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand." Matt. vii. 26.

³ Trees of righteousness, The Planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Isaiah lxi. 3.

⁴ "They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage." Psalm xciv. 5.

⁵ "Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but you must foul the residue with your feet?" Ezekiel xxxiv. 18.

⁶ "That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." Ephes. iv. 22.

castle after it had been erected in its original form, by the Master's orders, to be a strong hold for his peculiar servants at the time he last left them; but Mr. Fitz-Adam spoke the servants fair, when they alone had possession of the castle, and they let him in, and from that time he has ruled within its walls, hitherto making use of the Master's name, whenever his authority has been disputed. And with him came Madame le Monde, and her three daughters,¹ and Father Peter was also in their train, and so they got the dominion within the walls, and we, that is, those who hold to the true Master, were driven into the corners which we have occupied ever since, and which we shall continue to occupy till the Master comes, at which time all will be set right.² 'But,' added my uncle, 'you will know more of these

¹ "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John ii. 16, 17.

² "Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: and they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrow shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible." Isaiah xlii. 6-11.

things hereafter, though I advise you as you value your peace, not to make any acquaintance with the rulers of the house and their people, beyond what is absolutely necessary as with persons living under the same roof:—but,' continued he, 'we have on our side, though not altogether holding with me in all points, a worthy man who occupies the reading desk in the old chapel, and who at this time has great weight in the family. The time was indeed when this old chapel was nearly deserted for the newer chapel which father Peter occupied; but because father Peter refused to read the Master's letters to the people, and because a spirit of inquiry respecting these letters has for some months past risen amongst us, Father Peter has been deserted, and is losing ground, and the old chaplain gaining ground in proportion: so that the one is left comparatively to himself, whilst the other is followed by crowds. I had a little time since,' continued my uncle, 'very great hopes that the doctor, by whom I mean our rightful chaplain, would have been rendered very useful to many of the servants in leading them to the knowledge of the true Master, and in thus being an instrument for preparing them for a joyful reception of the Lord at his appearing; but Madame le Monde, with whom no good ever commences, fearing no doubt the same result of his faithful services—for what is a cause of hope to me, is that of fear to her,—took it into her head to tamper

with him, and thus to mar his usefulness as she has done that of many other of the most hopeful servants of the Lord;—and the way she took was as I shall tell you.’

‘Calculating his character, and judging him as she had judged too many others of the weak and feeble servants of our Master, (for we are all like silly sheep, and when we have gone astray know not how to return,) she immediately set to work to assail him where she thought she had found a weak side; and because he had filled himself up with the notion, that the blessed change to ensue in this place in the latter times was to be effected, not by the Master in person, but by the servants under the guide and direction of the Master, (an error into which too many of the true servants have fallen, and to which at one time my own mind somewhat leant, I must confess, till convinced of the gross arrogancy thereof by the Lord—the Interpreter,) she attacked him in that quarter; and affecting to be herself one of those whom he had in some measure convinced by his eloquence, she so puffed him up, and won him over, that now he scarcely ever addresses the people without consulting her upon the fit, and the suitable, and the convenient time, and the proper measure; &c. &c. in consequence of which his discourses have dwindled down to a mere nothing, having in them just so much of the truth as Madame le Monde can away with: and

when you know her, you will have some idea how little that is. And yet I do believe with all this, the Doctor has the root of the matter in him, though I much doubt whether his ministry will produce any fruit till it has been cut and lopped to the very stump. Thus you see, my nephew, that this man, who was enabled to bear a faithful witness to the truth, in times, when, through the influence of Father Peter, it was as much as his life was worth to proclaim his Lord's will, has been unable to withstand the blandishments of Madame le Monde ; and now that the rough wind has ceased to blow upon his person, is ready to part with his garments, and walk naked¹ in the sunshine of worldly favour. Truly we have need to pray that we may not be led into temptation.'

My uncle then finished this long discourse, pointing out to me that whereas the rulers of the house had formerly persecuted the Lord's people under various pretexts, even unto depriving them of all they held precious on earth, they had

¹ " And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write ; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God : I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot : I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked : I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." Rev. iii. 14—18.

of late taken up a new system, which in many instances seems to work more effectually to the destruction of the party, than any hitherto had recourse to, and this was the cant or affectation of general philanthropy; by which, right and wrong, good and evil, were utterly confounded, and any thing like firmness, branded with the name of superstition, obstinacy and narrow-mindedness. 'Such is the present order of things,' continued my uncle, 'as you will see by and by. And now, my nephew, I think that I have given you as much insight into the state of affairs in the castle as can be done by word of mouth; and nothing farther remains to be said, but what relates to my position in the family, who am one of the least worthy of my Lord's servants, having made less than many another would have done in my situation, of the peculiar favours and benefits bestowed upon me.'

'My place and my business has been appointed to me by my Lord. I am the keeper of my Lord's letters; it is my service to transcribe them, and disperse the copies, and it is more than I am sufficient for, and therefore I rejoice in the hope of your assistance; this is the service which is required of me, and my charge is this,¹ that I should neither take from or add one word to that

¹ "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." Deut. iv. 2.

which hath been written. I have little to do with the rest of the family, and although the time was when my life was threatened by those who hated my Lord, yet at present I have nothing more to fear than those petty mockeries and expressions of contempt, which some might think hard to endure, but which at my time of life and with the bright assurance which I enjoy, I find no great difficulty in bearing. But with you young men, the thing is different, and therefore if you will take my counsel, you will strive to keep yourself quiet—to stand to your post,¹ and meddle not with the business of those with whom you have no concern, so that thou stand in thy place when thy Lord comes.² Thus my uncle admonished and instructed me, and when we had sate awhile, I retired to rest, being weary with a long and painful journey.

But, as I was afterwards told by one who was well acquainted with these things, there was a great stir in the offices, when it was told the intendant that the nephew of the secretary was come. It happened that he was taking his wine, as was his custom, with Madame le Monde after his dinner, in the hall; for I promise you that the steward and the housekeeper fare of the best, and that all at my Lord's expence, and by

¹ "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. v. 21.

² "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in the lot at the end of the days." Dan. xii. 13.

his sufferance, for the reason given above. Now it seems that Madame le Monde had seen me as I passed through the offices, and having remarked that my coat was not precisely of the cut worn in the house, she had made inquiries concerning me, and had been told that I was the secretary's nephew and had come by invitation to assist my uncle in his duties.

Accordingly when seated, as I before said, with the steward, she entered upon the subject to the following effect. 'And so,' said she, 'we are like, I find, to have an addition to the family, or rather I should say, we have already an addition thereunto, of which no doubt you must be aware, for I can scarcely suppose that a measure of this kind should be resorted to and carried into effect without your approbation.'

'You speak paradoxes, madam,' replied the Intendant. 'I have not the smallest conception respecting that to which you refer.' The house-keeper then went on, with a peculiar smile about the mouth, which she commonly used on occasions of this kind, to inform him of all the particulars concerning me with which she had acquainted herself. Whereon the steward became extremely angry, saying, he knew not how any person in the house could dare to take the liberty to engage a servant or any assistant without consulting him; and he was for ringing the bell that moment, and sending for me, in order as he said, to show me

the outside of the house with as little ceremony as I had used to make myself acquainted with the inside, when the housekeeper thought it best to put in a word, and stroking and smoothing him down as she well knew how to do, she said, ' Now my good sir, permit me I pray you, to put in my word: I coincide with you altogether in your opinion as to what this young man deserves, and the time has been when I should have recommended a night's lodgings in the stocks as being too good for him ; nevertheless the measures would not now be seasonable, for experience has taught us that more may be done with persons of this description, by kind words than by harsh ones. By severity we only confirm the hatred of our enemies, and strengthen the hands of those who are impatient of our government ; whereas by a little address we may make a friend of an enemy : and although this young man comes of an evil stock, there are many of as little promise as he is, whom we have won over to our side by a show of kindness, and a proper application of little temptations such as I know how to throw in their paths. Every dog has his bait, and every man his price. Is not the doctor an encouraging example of what may be done with a little address ; for, whereas when we were at open war with him, he was as stiff and unmanageable as an unbroken steed, when we bethought ourselves of speaking smoothly to him, of complimenting him upon his

oratory, of professing ourselves instructed by it, and of inviting him to come kindly amongst and partake with us in the same dish, throwing all unfriendly feelings into the back ground ; did not we find him as ready to come as we could wish ? Yes, and have we not brought him to sit down side by side with those he used to hold in the greatest abhorrence, and sip with them out of the same bowl, and fall into their talk, and into their plans, and all because forsooth he would not be thought illiberal, or narrow-minded, or unfriendly ; and thus you see that he is become as it were a cypher as it regards his own party ; just a nothing at all, and worse in truth than nothing, as it affects them, and all the while thinking himself the most loyal of all his master's servants.'

' True, very true, what you say is only the very truth,' answered the steward ; ' and no doubt this new freak of liberality, or whatever else you may please to call it, is the very best decree our master ever invented, and surely his brain is fertile in decrees, and his mind full of wisdom. It quite vanquishes the other party, and that with their own weapons too, for if they vaunt themselves as they are fond to do of their charity, we beat them out and out at that work, for whilst they are willing to help all who come to them in the name of their master, we profess to love, and patronise, and assist those that come to us in no name at all, their very want of merit rendering

them more deserving of our benevolence. And the best is that all these fools are deceived with our seeming, whilst the wise ones laugh in their sleeves to see the enemy thus vanquished by their own weapons. And should not those laugh that win? and who can deny that we are the winners now; for how many of the servants in this house, who were once ready in the time of persecution, and when you were for trying harsh measures with them, were ready as I say to lay down their lives for him they call their Lord, now that this liberality has been rung awhile in their ears, would take the fiercest enemy of their master by the hand, saying, *Worthy brother, well met, welcome to my heart*; let us join hands for the present work, and let us cover all past disagreements with an earthen pot, and let them lie there till we have finished the business, or have enjoyed the entertainment for which we are come together.'

'Well,' continued the housekeeper, 'such being the case, see you not the thing at which I would aim, with respect to this young man.' 'And so, said the steward, you would have us try a shew of kindness towards him. Well,—be it so, I will leave the affair in your hands, and from me it shall receive no hindrance.'

Mr. Fitzadam then, as he that heard all this afterwards informed me, entered upon a somewhat long and grave discussion on the politics of the family; wherein he stated, how that his

master (that is the enemy of the Lord), having lately been made aware that the adverse party was growing in strength, and that open opposition tended rather to augment the spirit, than to break it, had suggested a change of measures, and had in consequence directed his own friends to assume the sheep's clothing, and to pretend a sort of conversion to the principles of the opposite side, at least to such parts of their creed and opinions as might not too greatly shock those on their own side who were not to be entirely trusted with the whole of their plans on this account, and with this view they had lately affected to adopt those feelings of the enemy, which were generally popular among the lower classes; for example, humility towards inferiors, benevolence towards our fellow-creatures, toleration as it regarded opinions, and universal love towards all mankind. And as they did not at the same time even affect to adopt those principles by which these kindly feelings are kept in purity, and directed into their proper channels, all of which tended to augment the glory of the master, they presently succeeded in their object, which was to convert humility into baseness, benevolence into profusion, toleration into a total neglect of all law, and universal love into profligacy, thus breaking down all boundaries of good and evil,¹

¹ "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" Isaiah v. 20.

and by their fair seeming, doing more injury apparently to the cause of the master, than fire, and sword, and open warfare could ever have effected. The steward having finished this statement, and concluded to the following purpose, at the same time sipping his wine with that air of satisfaction, which he always wore when congratulating himself on his own shrewdness. 'Since we have,' said he, 'at the suggestion of our master, sported the enemy's colours, and cried *peace, brotherhood, liberality, and good fellowship*, encouraging what offends the enemy under the pretext of charity, and talking treason under the cloak of liberality, we have gained many a point, which by our old course of severity, we should never have obtained. Why should we now hold back or change our policy?'

'And then,' added he, 'to observe how the foolish ones swallow the bait, and whilst we are playing fast and lose with them in the stream, with our hooks in their mouths, to hear them talk of their loyalty to their old master, and their services, and their merits, and their good works, and the reward which awaits them, would excite mirth in the very dead.' The intendant now filled his glass again, and having drank to the prosperity of his master, walked out of the room, commending the young stranger, (meaning me,) to the especial care of his companion. All this I was afterwards told by the young man who was waiting in the

room, viz. the same who had shown me to my uncle's apartment ; and he also told me more, for he said that the steward was scarcely gone out, before the housekeeper directed him to set the room to rights, and put out her tea-table, with cakes and other dainty morsels, such as she always kept by her in her closets in the wall ; which being accomplished, she bade him go to the chaplain, saying that she hoped to have the honour of his company to take tea with her that afternoon ; which message being duly carried, the doctor only stayed to change his dress before he obeyed the summons, for, as he was accustomed to say, who knows but that my conversation may be beneficial to the housekeeper, and that I may be made the means of bringing her to a more proper way of thinking respecting the real master of this family ?

Now by the time that the chaplain arrived, Madame le Monde had gathered her daughters about her, and they were all sitting round the fire, the tea-table being in the midst of them, and they being tutored by their mother, were ready to receive the doctor with their best smiles, and with many honied speeches, such as few men can listen unto, and keep that sobriety of mind which is needful in the guidance of life.¹ Nevertheless

¹ " For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil." Prov. v. 3.

" It is not good to eat much honey ; so for men to search their own glory is not glory." Prov. xxv. 27.

they knew perfectly well how far to go, and where to forbear; for their object was not to make the doctor believe that they were altogether what they were not, that is, faithful servants of the true Lord, but to bring him to bear with them, he knowing them not to be as yet among the faithful, by the shew of such qualities as were pleasing in those that were so. Hence when he had taken his seat among them, they began to insinuate certain flatteries relating to those parts of his character and conduct, whereon they knew from experience that he prided himself, viz. his attention to the children of the servants, his care in catechising them, and providing for their wants, and the earnestness with which he endeavoured to bring all parties together, to the promotion, as they chose to say, of kindness and brotherly-love, and of universal good: and thus whilst these young people were gratifying his feelings in one way, the mother was carefully administering to them in another. She well knew that he loved the velvet chair, with its downy cushion, which was always placed for him in the corner of the fire-place; and it was in that therefore that she caused him to sit, whilst she sweetened his beverage precisely to his taste, and took care that he should have the very choicest morsels; and when she found that he was in the highest state of enjoyment, stretching his legs before the fire, and regaling himself with that which she gave him,

until the sweet liquor ran out of the corners of his mouth, she began to turn to the subject for which she had sought his company; and having informed him of my arrival, and spoken of me with some commendation, as of one who might, in good hands, be an acquisition in the family, she proceeded to the following effect—for the young man who was handing about the tea, afterwards related every word to me.

‘ Now, my worthy doctor,’ said she, ‘ you and I know that there are some subjects in which we do not entirely agree; but again there are others in which we wholly coincide; and certain I am, if all of your party were as judicious, and candid, and benevolent as you are, and as ready to hold out the right hand of philanthropy to a fellow-servant, although he may not think with him in every point, there would not be the discords and differences in the family which now there are, to the great detriment of the household, and the injury of the master’s property; but inasmuch as that worthy man, the secretary, continued she, (for it seems that this Madame le Monde, has the custom when it serves her purpose, to give the most respectful epithets, to those she least likes), this good secretary of ours, is perhaps one of the most wrong-headed guides, a young man can have on entering first into life. I am very anxious that you, my excellent sir, should endeavour to form an acquaintance with the youth, and obtain his confi-

dence as soon as possible, in order that you may guard him against the absurd notions with which his uncle will certainly inspire him, if he is not prevented. There is no need, I suppose,' continued the housekeeper, 'to point out to you, my dear sir, what those unsocial and very peculiar notions are to which I allude; neither can I doubt but that you are thoroughly acquainted with them already.'

'Assuredly so, undoubtedly so, madam,' replied the doctor, 'I perfectly know that very peculiar notion to which you chiefly allude, viz. that extraordinary and inconceivable idea, pretended to be gathered from our master's letters, respecting his intention to return to this place, and to take the management of all affairs into his own hands, with the further singular notion built upon the former, viz. that none of those disorders of which we all complain, can be, or ever will be, regulated until the master comes; thus diverting the attention of the servants from their respective duties, and paralyzing the efforts of all parties, by endeavouring to convince each individual, that none of his efforts will ever prove effectual in producing that reform of manners and morals which we all desire so ardently, and to which we are undoubtedly approaching.' 'Dear sir,' added Madame le Monde, 'let the enemy say what he will, it surely cannot be possible that your labours, and exhortations, and instructions can be without

their effect ; not to speak of those of many others, who have been exerting their influence, and using their talents in every possible line, to improve the place, and add to the comfort of the family. What was this house, I ask, a few years since ? and what is it now ? and if we look out of doors, has not every thing taken almost a new form ? and yet these people pretend that nothing can be done till their master comes amongst us, and takes things into his own hands ; but I have no patience whatever, even to think of such absurdities. Has not every thing gone on¹ in the old course for years past, with the exception of the improvements spoken of above ? and what ground then have we for their new whims ? As I before said, I have not patience even to think of the folly of these people ; but their drift is easily seen. They are jealous of those who are in authority ; they are envious of the good works of such as you, my worthy sir ; and so they cry us all down together, and say that they expect no good until the master comes in person to set all things to rights ; and pray, my good sir, will you have the kindness to tell me whereupon they build these fancies ?

‘ On certain passages in our Lord’s letters, madam,’ replied the doctor, ‘ which passages they

¹ “ And saying, Where is the promise of his coming ? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” 2 Peter iii. 4.

wrest to their own purposes. For my own part, I certainly do see in these writings a promise or promises, of certain privileges to be granted in the course of time to these estates, whereby much prosperity and peace is to be secured to the people; and also a sort of prophecy, of great peace and happiness to be enjoyed by the servants, through the medium of the labours and care of the heads of this household; which heads, or rulers, under the direction of Mr. Interpreter, will be enabled to govern with more wisdom than they have hitherto done, and to correct old errors, and to introduce a new order of things. But as to any further inference to be drawn from these passages, touching the return of the master in person, to live with us and be with us, it is what I cannot see nor understand; and truly madam, I entirely agree with you, in thinking the idea to be one of the most mischievous which possibly can be broached, for what in effect does this suggestion tend towards, but to rendering the servants dissatisfied with their present rulers, and leading them from the performance of their present duties, to pursue speculations which have no foundation?’

‘Well, well,’ said the housekeeper, ‘we have had enough of this for the present, my excellent sir; and I have said enough, no doubt, to lead you to to have an eye upon the young stranger, and to keep him, if possible, from falling into the follies

of that pragmatical old fellow his uncle ; and now, if you please, let us call another question.' So she caused the cups and saucers to be removed, and because the doctor was not one who ever meddled with games of chance, which he counted unholy and unprofitable, the company had nothing for it till supper time, but conversation : but as the young man who told me all this, had done his work in the room, he could tell me no more of what passed at that season, nor indeed was it till long after, that I was made acquainted with so much as I have already related ; for, whilst all this was going forward, I was shut up within my uncle's apartments, in a little chamber left in the thickness of the wall, having a case-ment and a lattice opening out upon a garden, where were all manner of pleasant trees, and a fountain which, at times, that is, at the period of the former and latter rains, and the melting of the snows, jetted forth in a wonderfully pleasant manner, often soothing me to rest with its agreeable murmurs, when I was fatigued and harassed with the troubles of my station. On the night I speak of, these waters playing in the moon-beam, soon contributed with my weariness to put me into a very sound sleep, which held me till morning ; at which time, whether sleeping or waking, in a dream or otherwise, I thought that some one was speaking softly in my ears, and the words which this person spoke were so extraor-

dinary, that if I were to live for ever, I should never forget them ; they were to this effect, that I should be up and doing, for that the time was short, and my Master would accept my services,¹ and that I ought to account this acceptation as the greatest of favours ; but before I could tell who it was that thus whispered in my ear, behold a sound of cursing and altercation rose to my window, and opening my eyes suddenly, I saw no one by my bed, but some of my fellow servants were under the window abusing each other, and using such ill language, as I had little expected to have heard in such a place as I then was. There were two of them young lads, and they were contending with a fierceness which had caused the blood to mount to their very brows, whilst their eyes shot fire at each other. What the cause of their dispute might be I know not, neither did I inquire, for it was no business of mine, I thought ; but I was offended and displeased to think, that even my retirements were to be thus disturbed ; and as I dressed myself, (for I found in my apartment a chest well-provided with all things necessary for me, and suitable to my condition,² which

¹ "The night is far spent, the day is at hand : let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Rom. xiii. 12.

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee : behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. vi. 2.

² "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature ? And why take ye thought for raiment ? Consider the

provision, so much beyond what I had any right to have expected, ought to have made me thankful,) yet as I was saying, even whilst I was putting these things on, I could not help thinking, Where is the peace to come from which has been promised me, if the sound of brawls like these is to come into my very bed-chamber? However, being dressed, and in somewhat better humour, from finding my figure much improved from what it had been the day before, from the various accommodations of clean linen and a new coat, I stepped out of my room into my uncle's parlour, where I found the old gentleman, busy at his desk doing his Master's work, whilst waiting my appearance for breakfast; and behold, the breakfast was set out in the room, and consisted of what was wholesome and agreeable.

Whilst we were refreshing ourselves, my uncle failed not presently to fall upon that subject

Illies of the field, how they grow; they toll not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matt. vi. 27—34.

which was ever uppermost in his mind, viz. the return of his master. 'To-day, nephew,' he said, 'I hope that you will commence that work for which you have been called to this blessed service. We are as it were waiting for the coming of the best of Masters,¹ and if we are here long enough we shall assuredly have the pleasure not only of witnessing his approach, which will, as his letters assure me, be such a sight as never yet blessed the eyes of man: or in case that we are not permitted to remain here till that period, we shall be allowed to make a part of his glorious train,² when he comes to take possession of his own, so that, turn the matter which way you please, nephew, we are to be the gainers by his coming, and to be the partakers of his triumph over that enemy who has lorded it so long over his inheritance.'

Here I interrupted my uncle, to ask what he meant by that expression which he had used, to wit, if we are not permitted to remain here.

¹ "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 4—7.

² "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. iv. 16—18.

‘Nephew,’ he replied, ‘you must understand that the servants of this house, and the tenants of this estate are often changed. The master calling one another from time to time into his presence in some place far distant, where he keeps his court, but of which we,’ continued my uncle, ‘have but little account, inasmuch as none of those who have visited it have ever returned to give us the description of it.’¹ Yet we are assured by my master’s letters that they who love him are there entertained in a very agreeable manner; although no such hopes are held out for those² servants who have been unfaithful. But whilst we feel that perfect assurance that our master (who as I have often before said is one of ten thousand) being altogether without fault,³ will assuredly provide for those whom he hath loved and redeemed from the slavery to which his enemy had subjected them, yet we have many fears, (and those well-grounded,) for the case of such as have refused his service. But nephew, to return to that from which I set out, and that is your peculiar case, which I desire especially to explain to

¹ “As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.” Job vii. 9, 10.

² “And if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.” Eccles. xi. 3.

³ “The Lamb without blemish, and without spot.” 1 Peter i. 19.

you, and that more largely than I could by letter, You were a wanderer in a strange land, hungry and clothed in rags, when the call came to you through my instrumentality, but through the suggestion of the Lord, to turn your steps hitherward ; not that you were accounted worthier than others, for truly, nephew, there is no good in you, nor excellency of any kind to render you acceptable in the sight of our master ; nevertheless it has pleased him to call you, and thus to reveal his love to you ; and be it remembered by you, that the master who thus exhibited his love for you in your filthy¹ and destitute situation, will never forsake you, for he is a man of his word, and he is able to do all which he purposes ; and now, even now, at this time, you may be assured that he will preserve you, promote you, and raise you from the dunghill, to a place of high honour in his service, and all independent of any desert of your own,² as I before said. Nevertheless the love which he has testified towards you will have a constraining power upon you, and will compel you to do his work ; and what is his work which he has given you to do, but to copy the letters

¹ " For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. v. 10.

² " For who maketh thee to differ from another ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive ? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it ?" 1 Cor. iv. 7.

which he has sent us, and to disperse them amongst his servants? This has been the work for which he has employed these feeble hands; and I have found such delight in the employment, that I may truly say it brings its reward with it.¹ The good man then took down the volume which I had seen in his hand the evening before, and having given me a desk with the implements for writing, he appointed me my work. As soon as we were refreshed, and being himself set in his place, the windows being open to admit the air, we pursued our work in a stillness,² which was most pleasing to me, who had experienced much fatigue from the labour and turmoil of a long and wearisome journey. But before I began to write, I turned over the letters, and examined their contents. Their subjects were various; they contained the account, first, of our master's title to the estate, of the establishments of the people therein, and of the beauty of its first condition, when it was a garden planted by a divine hand,³—then of the rebellion of the people, who being desirous to become their own masters, fell under the thralldom of their Lord's enemy, the consequence of which every one must feel.⁴ Then these letters spoke

¹ "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works." Eccles. ix. 7.

² "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." Isaiah xxxii. 17.

³ Genesis ii.

⁴ See the fall of man, as related in Gen. iii.

of a visit made by the master to this place with the purport of reclaiming his servants from the enemy to whom they had sold themselves, with a long and most distressing account of the manner in which these unfaithful ones had rejected him, driving him from them with every species of contumely;¹ and finally it contained multitudes of promises of his second coming to establish his rights, and to exterminate the enemy.

But, as I perused these letters rapidly, I could not be said to comprehend them in any other way than extremely imperfectly; however, I consoled myself by thinking that this knowledge would come in its course, not knowing that it never could be obtained by human reason.²

And thus the forenoon wore away, when suddenly we heard a tapping at the door, and my uncle crying, 'If you come in the master's name, walk in,' who should enter but the doctor, who, stepping forward with much politeness, said that he was come to pay his respects to me, having been apprized of my arrival.

'My nephew is obliged to you,' replied my uncle, taking the word out of my mouth, and at the same time directing me to set a chair for the visitor.

¹ Isaiah liii.

² "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14.

Now this gentleman, as I before said, was the chaplain of the household ; a man of a pleasant and comely appearance, and of a serious manner, though somewhat pompous and sententious, laying down the law as it were in his discourse, and more given to talk than to listen,—a habit, as my uncle told me, which he had acquired from his station in the family, as reader and expounder of his master's letters ; for the duty which his master had given him to do when he left the house was to instruct the servants in their Lord's will, as laid down in these letters ; and to explain such parts of them as might be difficult to understand, the Interpreter being supposed to be his guide in these duties. How far he performed this duty faithfully at all times will hereafter appear. In the eyes of some indeed, he had always done all things well ; yet as my uncle afterwards made me understand, he had in some degree of late fallen into the error of Father Peter, in having his reservations also, and in maintaining that there were certain portions of these letters not fit for the ear of the lower servants, or of those of the higher ranks who were not instructed ; he did not indeed go the lengths of the Father who held that the letters ought never to be given to any one who could not have the advantage of his own comments thereon ; but he still maintained that there were some parts and portions of these writings which ought not to be

dwelt upon in his public discourses. Nay, he went so far as to say, that very dangerous consequences might ensue to the servants, by giving them too clear a view of the extent of the Lord's love for them, and by leading them to see that that love is independent of their own merits, not considering that the Lord had himself made no exceptions or distinctions of the persons for whom these letters were intended,¹ but had addressed them alike to all his servants, high and low, and of every degree, enjoining the same on those to whom he had left the ministry of his word.² But I am falling into so many digressions, that I am in danger of losing myself and my reader also; it will be well therefore to return from whence I set out, to wit, the visit of the chaplain in my uncle's room.

After the first compliments had passed, the visitor, looking towards the desk from which I had just risen, and taking as it were his text from the books and writing apparatus which were spread thereon, began to congratulate me on the agreeable situation, and pleasant and profitable occupation into which I had fallen; adding, happy are those who from their youth up, are

¹ "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts x. 34.

² "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts xx. 28.

engaged in the service of such a Master as ours, who are called upon in the days of their strength to devote themselves to his work, and who may hope to live to see their exertions crowned with success in the advancement of the good of the people, and the restoration of peace and order to the heritage of our dear Lord. All this sounded mighty fine in my ears, insomuch so, that I looked from the speaker to my uncle, and from my uncle to the speaker, as if I would have said, 'Speak for me, uncle, and express for me how agreeable these expressions are to me.' However, my uncle neither returned my looks, nor spoke a word, but sat playing with the pen with which he had been writing, like one either absent, or determined not to speak. I was, therefore, left to make as good an answer as I could: though I do not rightly remember what it was, yet I think it was something to the following effect, to wit, 'that I trusted that I should be found faithful and useful, and that my services would prove to be profitable to my Master.'

'They can be no further profitable, my young friend,' replied the chaplain, 'than as our good Master chooses to account them such, for we are after all poor creatures,' and can scarcely be said

¹ Unprofitable servants.—“ So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.” Luke xvii. 10.

to earn our salt by our labours, for think of the charge and the cost we are and have been to our Master.' And then he began and went on a long time on that theme, on which he often delighted to descant, as my uncle had informed me, viz. on what had passed when the Master had been last at the house, and the shameful treatment he had then met with, at the very time when his errand was that of the most tender love, viz. the redemption of his people from the bondage to which they had sold themselves; drawing this conclusion from thence, that we must ever remain debtors for kindness like this, and never count ourselves as profitable servants: to all which my uncle heartily subscribed, but, as I observed, relapsed again into silence, when the chaplain went on to speak in the way I shall shew.

'Well,' said he, 'and we have suffered, and deserve to suffer for our misconduct, and are hourly made to see and to feel what poor sinful creatures we are, and how severe the bondage of the enemy of our Lord is; but we have a promise, and a promise which will stand fast for ever, for our Master never departs from his word, that peace and order shall be restored through all his dominions, and that things shall be with us, as they were in the beginning, before the enemy and his agents had found admittance in this place. And it is to this happier state of things to which all our conjoint labours are tending, my young

friend,' he continued, 'and have been tending for some months past. The present,' he added, raising his tone, 'is the period of brotherly love; our house which was once the seat of jarring interests and furious factions may now be called Philadelphia:¹ and although my friend there sits silent, yet I must be pardoned if I assert, that it is through the measures I have been led to adopt, and by endeavouring to be all things to all men,² with the view of benefitting some, that this happier order of things is so far advanced. It is not for me to speak, and yet, though your worthy uncle there shakes his head, as not approving my measures, I am myself astonished at the things which I have been able to bring to pass by pursuing a moderate course, and insinuating, rather than violently enforcing, the truths contained in the letters of our Lord. In the first instance, I have rendered these letters acceptable to many who formerly entertained the most violent prejudices against them. I have been enabled to establish a seminary, upon a very liberal plan for the instruction of the little ones of the family, and have brought many together in harmony, who were before at variance; and only to speak of Madame le Monde, and the young ladies her daughters, all who have been

¹ Philadelphia, the sixth state of the visible church.

² "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." 1 Cor. ix. 22.

any time in the house know how bitter these ladies used to be against the party which professed particular respect for our Master. Whereas now, through my persuasions, Madame is to the full as obliging to those whom she used to call enemies as to her friends: and then what kindness does she exercise towards the sick, be they of what party they may; and how liberally does she speak of those who are against her; and truly it is pleasant to see her daughters occupying themselves about the poor, and assisting me in my schools, taking the little ones in their arms, and providing them with garments. Whilst our old fellow servant, the librarian, who as you may well know, Mr. Secretary, was one of our bitterest enemies, has been so won over by the kindness I have used towards him, that it depends only on you to make him your fellow-labourer in the important work you have in hand, viz.—the distribution of our Master's letters.'

My uncle changed his position on being thus addressed, but spoke not a word. Yet I observed that his lip trembled, as if he were inwardly agitated.

'Thus,' continued the doctor, 'we are advancing towards that state which is spoken of in our Master's letters, wherein his will shall be so fully attended to, and the minds of the people so thoroughly instructed, that we shall be in a state of happiness and prosperity, such as it would now

be difficult even to conceive, unless through the light given in the Master's letters.'

'And all this,' said my uncle, speaking at last, 'to be effected by you and your fellow servants, a great proportion of whom are decided and declared enemies of the Master.'

'Yes,' returned the other, 'through the instrumentality of our Lord's faithful servants will this great and blessed revolution be effected; together with, or rather in consequence of, the teaching of the interpreter whose influence will then become more decided.'

'The influence of the interpreter cannot be more decided than it now is with the faithful servants of our Master,' replied my uncle; 'he is present now with them in all their secret counsels; he directs them in all their public measures; he instructs them that the day of the Lord is not yet arrived;' and that the Master has not yet

¹ "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth

thought fit to take upon himself the command ;¹ that his rule is now a secret one ; and that those who now govern openly must pass away, before that glorious state shall arrive, in which those who are now driven into a corner shall be brought into the light, and sit in the high places of this house.² But I find no where in these letters a promise given of the conversion of the powers of this world to the service of the Master, nor of any authority to be given to the servants to rule in the absence of him from whom alone they can derive any right. On the contrary we are made to understand that the enemy will manage every thing relative to public affairs till the end of the present order of things ; and in such wise, that when the Lord comes, he will not find faith in the household ;³ and moreover we are made to under-

also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"—2 Peter iii. 5—12.

¹ "Hereafter I will not talk much with you : for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John xiv. 30.

² "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."—Dan. vii. 26, 27.

³ "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth ?"—Luke xviii. 8.

stand that the enemy is permitted to manage these matters, in order that the patience and fidelity of the true servants of the best of masters may be exercised ; hence we are afraid that these same faithful servants, although secretly supported and consoled by the interpreter, will never be able to make a head to fight and to conquer until the Master himself is present to avenge his own cause.'

' Beshrew your interpretations,' replied the doctor, growing very warm, ' from whom have you received them, and from what passages do you derive these conceits, which are to my mind calculated to unnerve every arm, and to make every man faint in the midst of his labours. If things must remain as they are,—if the enemy's agents must rule till the Master comes,—if his substance must be wasted in riot,—if his name must be held in contempt in his own halls,—if the owls and the bats and the canker and the moth, are always to occupy our towers, till our Lord appears, bearing with him the besom which is to brush them all down ; what then, I say, is the need of our working ? Wherefore are we to strive and to labour, and to endeavour to restore order, if our Master when he comes will count all our labours nought, and will take all into his own hands, to order and to arrange every thing anew ? I say your doctrine, take it from whence you will, is discouraging in the extreme, and

would unnerve every member, and nullify every desire for exertion.'

'We work and perform the duties which our master left us to do,' replied my uncle calmly, 'not because we ever hope to be the means of setting that right, which an enemy, infinitely more powerful than ourselves, and one too who still rules, and will rule till our master in his own presence has asserted his own rights, is constantly setting wrong; but because, in the first place it behoves us to do our master's bidding, and in the second place, inasmuch as we hope and trust to be made the instruments of inspiring a spirit of fidelity and love in the hearts of many individuals, who, at his second coming, may go to meet him with joy and rejoicing.¹ And whereas you would know of me what are the passages of my Lord's communications, whereon I build my assurance of his coming to take the rule into his own hands, I am ready to give you as many as you please; for I take it for granted that you do not doubt the authenticity of our Lord's letters.'

'Am not I a servant of the master,' replied the doctor, 'how then should I doubt his word?'

'I trust that you are,' returned my uncle, 'and therefore I take it for granted, that you believe every word of these letters, and that you will not

¹ "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah xxxv. 10.

deny the passage which I am about to bring forward. When last our Lord left this place, and disappeared from the eyes of his servants, he sent messengers to them to console them with this promise, that as he had left them, in like manner, he would return to them.¹ He did not say, or cause to be said, that he would send to them, or be with them in the person of another, or by substitutes, but that he would return as he went, in his own proper person.'

'I grant it, I grant it,' replied the doctor; 'I know that he will come back in his own proper person, and that he will take unto himself at that time, all those amongst us his servants who shall be found faithful and attached, in order that where he is, we may be also.'² I do not dispute this point, for herein is my hope and consolation, under all the troubles of my present situation; but I do not understand how you derive from the expression above cited, any corroboration of the opinion which you so pertinaciously hold forth;—to wit, that the master has promised to come, and live with us, and take upon himself, in his own

¹ "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts i. 10, 11.

² "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." John xiv. 2.

proper person, the management of his own affairs in this place:—an opinion which I hold to be at once ill-founded and extremely detrimental, in weakening the hands of those who are faithful to him in the present time; for if, as you say, there is nothing which we can do to set things to rights, what needs our striving any further? what avails all our labours, and our efforts, and all our early risings and late takings of rest, or our endeavours to lead those in authority into a proper way of thinking and of acting?’

‘Our present inquiry,’ replied my uncle, ‘is not what the influence of my opinions may be, in depriving us of our high notions of our own good deeds; or how they may act upon the minds of the servants, to divert them from their duties, or to strengthen them in the performance of them; though by the way the question is a new one, for who ever before thought needful to ask, how the expectation of the speedy return of a father, or of a master, would act upon a son or a servant? Nevertheless, as I was saying, the present question is not how my opinions may act upon the minds of our fellow-servants, if they were generally allowed; but, whether there are any intimations in the letters respecting this return; and not only respecting the simple return of the master in person, as in person he went, but as it respects his assumption of authority in this house, and his residence with us for a period according to his

pleasure? This I say is the present question, and from this, my brother, we will not depart.'

'Well then to the point,' said the doctor, 'what may you have to allege?'

'Where,' said my uncle, as he turned over the leaves of the volume which lay before him, viz. the volume which contains the written communications of the master; 'where, my good sir, do you say that our master now is?'

'At court,' replied the doctor.

'Aye,' returned my uncle, 'in the seat of government. Well, listen then, and hear what this volume says, in speaking of a future time: it says, a messenger shall come from the seat of government, having the power of casting into the dungeon; and he shall lay hold of our Master's enemy, and bind him for many days, and shut him up, and seal him with a seal that he shall deceive the people no more; and after that he shall have his liberty for a short time; and then the royal seats shall be set in our judgment-halls, and those who love the Master, and do not wear the livery of the enemy, shall live and rule with him for many days.'¹

¹ "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was

‘All this,’ replied the doctor, ‘is figurative ; and its signification is totally different from the interpretation you choose to put upon it.’

‘What other interpretation could you possibly put on words so plain ?’ asked my uncle.

The doctor shuffled in his seat, and then said, ‘Can you believe that the Master would lower himself and descend so far from his dignity, accustomed as he is to a royal seat, to come amongst such as we are ? It is an absurdity, Mr. Secretary, which I never will admit.’

‘But the letter, the words of the letter !’ returned my uncle, ‘what do you make of them, doctor ?’

‘Why,’ replied the doctor, ‘is it not all as one and the same thing, whether we go to him, or he comes to us, and is not one and another from time to time called into his presence, and to be with him where he is ? What matters it, whether his faithful servants are with him here, or with him where he now may be ?’

‘Little,’ returned my uncle, ‘I conceive, as it

given unto them : and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power ; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” Rev. xx. 1—6.

regards our present views, and plans, and prospects: therefore as long as words have a fixed and certain meaning, I will not allow that, if he, who never speaks a falsehood, says he will come to us,¹—can be possibly understood to mean that he will call us to himself, that is, speaking of us collectively as men living in a place specified, and not as individuals. Moreover he elsewhere says, that when he comes he will bring those of us with him, who are already gone to him.² What do you make of this, especially when he further states, that such of us as shall be still here when he comes shall go forth to meet him; that is, speaking of us as of a household, and not as of individuals?’

‘But what,’ said the doctor, ‘is all this turmoil about? Whether we are to go to him, or he to come to us, I say how can it affect our present views and purposes? Has he not promised that if we are found faithful, we shall be with him,

¹ “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” Jude 14, 15.

² “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thess. iv. 16—18.

why then need we be so anxious to know where we are to meet and be blessed in his presence?’

‘ See you not,’ replied my uncle, ‘ where it affects our views and our plans, and that so decidedly and so completely as to change the object almost of every action of our lives? We both agree in one point, that there is a promise that there shall be a time in which the confusion and disorder which now reigns in this our Master’s domain, shall be thoroughly set right—a time in which all our little ones shall be instructed in what is right,¹ in which our gardens shall bring forth fruit in abundance, and our rocks shall drop with honey; ² in short, a period of universal prosperity in which all our evil rulers shall be driven from the land.³ Now in this we both agree, but you say that this blessed state will be brought about by your instrumentality, and that of your faithful fellow-servants, under the direction of the interpreter. Whereas I say that what we can do will never bring this desirable state of things to pass, and that this never will, and never can be effected but by the

¹ “ And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” Isaiah liv. 13.

² “ He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.” Psalm lxxx. 16.

³ “ And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beasts of the land devour them: but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.” Ezek. xxxiv. 28.

Master himself, when he comes to take the rule in his own hand.’¹

‘ Well,’ returned the other, ‘ and this is much what I have heard before.’

‘ And is unsavoury to many,’ returned my uncle, because it reduces us all, as it were to one standard, counting our boasted efforts and exertions to be as nought, as to the production of the great general reformation of which we speak (for the enemy rules and will rule till the Master comes), although they may be rendered of some use for the guidance and persuasion of individuals among our fellow-servants, and for the consolation and strengthening of others: but remember, doctor, that I say individually, and as it were secretly; for our Master’s party here, have little to do at the public tables, and in the chief seats in our halls.’

‘ Well,’—returned the doctor, turning to me, as it were to shake off the irritation of his feelings, which he felt no doubt to be great impediments in his way towards performing the wishes of the housekeeper, inasmuch as that he was not come to call out my uncle to a declaration of his sentiments, but rather to gain me over in such sort, that I might be less liable to be influenced by them,—‘ but I am thinking, young sir, that I am

¹ “ And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.” Ezek. xxxiv. 23.

not acting the part which civility should dictate, when I came expressly to pay my respects to the nephew, to be tilting and jousting with your venerable relation; but you must know and believe, that after all, your good uncle and I are the best of friends; we have known each other many years, we have served one good Master I trust, from our youth up; and though we always renew our combats when we meet, yet as the points on which we argue are minor matters comparatively, our arguments have no tendency to weaken friendship.'

My uncle was going to speak in this place, but the doctor, raising his tone, though not angrily, said, 'Come, come, no more of this to-day, my old friend, let us rather seek the points in which we agree, than argue about those in which we disagree.' My uncle bowed, as if he would have said, be it so; and then the doctor went on to speak of things and occurrences of smaller moment, and such as I hardly conceived to be worthy of his serious attention; but so it will ever be, when two persons meet who are conscious that their opinions on important points are dissimilar; they are naturally driven to trifle in discourse, and because they fear the rock in the centre of the lake, to keep beating up and down in the shallows near the bank. So after a while the chaplain took his leave, and we being left to ourselves, my uncle said, 'I would willingly, my nephew, for a week or

two to come, that you should keep yourself as quiet as possible in this family, associating only with me, and endeavouring to acquire information respecting our master's affairs ; you will, probably, be called out to more active duties by and by,' he added, ' and the time will be little enough for strengthening and establishing you in the proper performance of these duties.'

I had nothing to urge against this decision, yet I would rather have been busy and about, than be always at my uncle's side, for the ways of young and old are different, and I wanted to get acquainted with my fellow-servants, and to see the housekeeper and her daughters, of whom I frequently heard much from the young man whom I have mentioned several times before.

This young man had been brought up under Madame le Monde, and had at one time been an especial favourite of her's, but having of late taken a disgust to her service, through the suggestions of the interpreter, he seemed almost ready to come over to the other side. My uncle had great hopes of him, notwithstanding he yet wavered, but being assured that the chains in which his mistress held him would speedily be broken for him ; he called him Theophilus, as a sort of token that he felt assured he was an object of the master's love. It was from this young man, however, that I heard most of the gossip of the family, and was most strongly led to desire to see more of what was

passing without. My mind being in that sort of perverted state, that his very dispraise of the house-keeper and of her daughters awakened my curiosity. I had a mind too to see the library, and to get acquainted with the librarian, who was accounted an uncommonly learned man in the house ; also to see some of the state apartments and pictures, for there are many of these also ; but my uncle kept me close by his side, and put me off whenever I wanted to break bounds, but he did it so gently, that I could not find it in my heart to rebel against him. In the mean time I was kept close to my work, that is, to make fresh copies of the Master's letters, wherein I found many things which excited my wonder, and opened my mind, confirming all that my uncle had said to me, respecting the character of the Master, and his right to the possession of the estate whereon we dwelt ; also of his reasons for his leaving the house for a while in other hands : neither did I fail to see proof convincing of the return of the Lord, to take the charge of all things, and never again to separate himself from his faithful servants, whose redemption he had purchased, before either they or their parents had known their right hand from their left.

And thus passed several weeks. I thought them long, ungrateful and thankless wretch that I was ; yet what would I many times since have given for some of those opportunities, then so lightly

thought of, of conversing with my uncle, who was altogether the person best instructed in the Master's will, of any one I ever met with? But it too often happens that graceless children thus despise the blessing and consolation of a wise parent's society, until that blessing and consolation is removed; and so it was with me. I knew not my uncle's value till I had lost him; therefore I make no doubt, but that I shewed impatience of his company, and of the quiet life we led; for after some weeks he said to me,—‘Nephew, you are perhaps weary of the retired life we lead, and desire to see more of the household; it is true that your experience with us has hitherto been small, and your knowledge of our ways all taken from hearsay; you have hitherto been as a young eagle¹ in a nest, but the time is now come that you must try your wings. It was the Lord's pleasure, who cares for you though you think little of him,² that you should have time for study and reflection before you are initiated into the more difficult parts of your business; which consists not only in preparing copies of these letters, but in dispersing them amongst our fellow servants, in which work you

¹ “As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings. So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.” Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

² “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” 1 Peter v. 7.

will find much that is discouraging, and that from some whom you would not expect; but you shall accompany me this evening, and we will take a circuit through the house, and you will then be able to form some notion of those with whom for the present our lot is cast.'

I was glad to hear this proposition, for as I before said, I was tired of the quiet life I led, my heart not being altogether I fear in the work I had had to do: accordingly, being led by my uncle, I followed him willingly from the long passage, at the end of which was his apartment, into the principal hall. This was a magnificent room, wide and high, its windows being of crystal of various colours,¹ calculated to give a beautiful glow to the rays of light which shot through them, but, as I instantly discerned, much embrowned with a thick coat of dust, which lay upon them, and being further darkened by tawdry curtains which hung over them in remnants, much tattered and defaced though originally of a fine sort of tapestry. The flooring of the hall was, I saw, not equal, but raised at one end, like a divan or throne; this had been, I understand, a change effected by Mr. Fitz-Adam to please Madame le Monde, who disapproved of sitting to dinner as it were on a level with those whom she accounted

¹ "And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." Isa. liv. 12.

inferior.¹ The chairs on this divan were I saw of ivory,² with blue and scarlet; whereas the seats occupied by the inferior servants, or those who sat below the divan were of ordinary construction, being only benches without ornament. Now down the centre of this hall, between the chairs and benches, was a long table whereupon, as my uncle informed me, the family dined. There were also on the same floor sundry parlours and withdrawing rooms, all of them set forth with costly furniture, bedizened with burnish and gilding. Nevertheless the rooms looked dark and dusty, exhibiting tokens of moth and rust, and apparently standing much in need of repair and of brushing. 'Methinks,' said I, 'our house-maids are not of the most brisk and orderly, nor our housekeeper of the most thrifty; that is if I may judge by the condition of these chambers.'

'All will be set right by and by,' replied my uncle, using a very common expression of his, 'but our governors do not approve of those who would awake the sleeping housewives, and rouse them to work; and indeed some pretend that this

¹ "For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment. And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts." James ii. 2-4.

² "Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory, brought out of the isles of Chittim." Ezek. xxvii. 6.

old furniture would not bear the scouring, but would tumble to pieces under the brush.'

So saying, my uncle led me up a fine flight of stairs, though one which seemed somewhat crazy, as if the stays had given way in some places in the wall, for the steps cracked and creaked hugely under our feet, as we ascended.

'Tjs no safe mounting here,' said my uncle, 'a man would be best below, but we will just take a look at the first floor, and leave those who will to mount to the towers.'

So we went on and came to the library ;—a noble sized room it was, though so dark that although it was broad day without, we should not have seen an inch before us within without the lamp which hung from the ceiling ; and this darkness, as I afterwards found, was owing to the multitude of volumes which were reared up against the windows, to the utter exclusion of the light of heaven.¹ In the midst of this apartment sat the librarian, a young-looking man, meagre, and with a very keen piercing eye, which rolled restlessly, seldom fixing, even for a moment, on the face of the person to whom he spoke, or indeed long on any other object. On our opening the door, this young man arose, and coming short up to my uncle, began, as I found was the way with him, to

¹ "And further, by these, my son, be admonished : of making many books there is no end ; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." Eccles. xii. 12.

pursue the subject which happened to be uppermost in his mind, viz. the new system which had just been taken up in the family, according to the suggestion of the Master's enemy.

'I had been thinking,' said he, 'to have called in your rooms, Mr. Secretary, but am happily prevented by your visit to me. I have been lately much engaged in examining, with a candid and liberal eye, the volume which contains the letters of him you call Master. I see much to admire in them, though I do not see that they tend to establish his sovereign claim to this house and estate; nevertheless, there is so much that is excellent in them, with respect to morality, that I should most gladly lend my assistance in copying and distributing them, and thus join with you and the chaplain in your work of kindness towards the lower order of the servants; for it is a favourite object of mine, to go hand in hand with the rulers and principal heads of this family, in every attempt which they may think it right to make for the improvement of our people in the lower offices. We have long wanted that sort of brotherly love, which ought to unite one family, and in the exercise of which the prosperity of a household must chiefly consist; for as the old proverb says, "a house divided against itself can never stand," so am I convinced, that the want of prosperity, and peace, and general improvement, which every one must lament in this family, originates in the

differences of opinion which have ever existed amongst us, and which, I have no doubt, will entirely disappear, when knowledge prevails to the extent we wish, and when every leading individual is willing to yield a small degree of his ancient prejudices. And,' proceeded the young man, with a volubility of expression which made me (inexperienced as I was) to stare with wonder—'I am happy to say that this, which has for a long time since been the desideratum of every philosophic mind, advances rapidly to its completion. All parties are as it were, mutually approaching from the circumference to the centre, every one sees the necessity of mutual accommodation, and of that spirit of moderation and liberality by which universal benevolence is engendered; and every mind, however originally discordant, is brought into that state of harmony with the rest, by which all impediments to the improvement of the family is removed, and every facility made to administer to the introduction of that pure order of things, by which the golden age will be restored, and man will attain that perfection for which nature originally prepared him.'

During this long speech, which was run off with surprising rapidity, I stood perfectly amazed, and my uncle as perfectly unmoved, for there was nothing in all this which he had not heard frequently before; but the orator, whom by the by

I saw very imperfectly owing to the obscurity of the apartment, had hardly finished his exordium, so abruptly commenced and so glibly carried on, when my uncle answered, I thought, somewhat drily, that he preferred doing the work which his Master had given him to do, according to his own plans rather than those of another; 'and to be plain with you, Mr. Librarian,' he added, 'I should not wish either to borrow or receive the help of one who entertains doubts respecting the right of the Master to call himself Master though I pretend not to investigate the motives which may have induced him to make such tenders of his services; for truly,' continued my venerable friend, 'if you, Mr. Librarian, do not entirely believe the words of those letters, or the truth of him who wrote them, I see not how you, as an honest man, can busy yourself in distributing them amongst your fellow-servants.'

'Although' returned the Librarian, with a seeming mildness which I thought spoke much in his favour, who was as you know, my reader, but new to these scenes—'although I may not agree with you Mr. Secretary, in all you may think touching these epistles, I may, nevertheless, have that sort of respect for them, or for parts and portions of them as may lead me to think that, upon the whole, the distribution of them may be beneficial to my fellow-servants. I may also have a respect for your opinions, and

those of that worthy man, the Doctor; and I may be willing to coalesce, and go hand in hand with you in any plan you may form, which may have the smallest chance of benefiting our fellow-men. I may think that any thing which tends to bring brethren together into one bond of union, may be an object to be desired; and I may think, that if we wait for such an object as may be wholly and entirely unexceptionable, we may wait for ever, and never meet at all. And, is the promotion of love, of liberality, of general benevolence, and utility to be despised; and am I to be rejected from this philanthropic coalescence, because in some small matter I may not entirely acquiesce with every individual of the family?

‘Small matter!’ replied my uncle, ‘and do you call it a small matter in a household, to be disagreed respecting the rights and person of the Master; if this be a small matter, I know not what is a great one. You tell me that you question the right of him I call Master to the possession of this domain; and you expect me to coalesce with you, and give you the right hand of fellowship, whilst you acknowledge this doubt; and you do more, you ask me to permit you to assist me in the service of the very Master whose rights you question.’ ‘Truly, Mr. Librarian, I can have no communion with you.’ I wish you

¹ “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate,

well, and would be glad to see you delivered from your error; but I can have nothing to do with you in the way of accepting your services.'

Thus speaking, my uncle walked out of the library, shaking as it were the dust of the apartment from the soles of his feet;¹ and what had I to do but to go after him, though I must confess that I thought he might have selected less offensive words, wherewith to express his sentiments. However, it was not for me to call him to account, I therefore followed him silently as he proceeded towards an open gallery which runs along the first floor on the outside of one front of the house, — a gallery inclosed in lattice work, which was in its time, as I afterwards found, a favourite place of the Master's, where he used to show himself in time past, when he sometimes visited his people.² It had been in its day a very fair and beautiful place, and still indeed, though long forsaken, and as it were encumbered and spoiled by the rubbish which had fallen from the loose stones above, shewed what it had once been, being adorned with flowering shrubs and odo-

saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Cor. vi. 17.

¹ "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Luke x. 11.

² "Behold he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice." Sol. Song ii. 9.

riferous creepers, winding in and out through the interstices of the lattice. At the end of the gallery he turned into a noble old apartment, which he informed me was the place in which the family met to hear the Lord's letters read aloud and explained. The roof of this apartment was supported by twelve pillars,¹ and there was to the east, one noble window, the frame of which was set with precious stones, and a running pattern of bells and pomegranates, exceedingly beautiful; but it seems that *Madame le Monde*, who is an enemy every where to broad day light,² had persuaded the doctor to allow certain old tablets, curiously gilt and varnished, to be fixed up as a screen to the window, thus excluding the direct rays of light, and shedding a universal gloom over the apartment. My uncle failed not to point out this abomination, as he called it; at the same time causing me to observe what was graven on these tablets, viz. certain ancient laws which are not now in force³ in the family, in-

¹ "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Exod. xxiv. 4.

² "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John iii. 19.

³ "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Col. ii. 13, 14.

asmuch as that they had been superseded by such as were more agreeable to the present state of the Lord's servants. In this apartment, as in the hall, I observed a distinction of seats; the chairs which were set for the steward and housekeeper, being covered with velvet, and studded and embossed with gold, whilst the benches, nay, and very walls in the remoter parts of the apartment were sordid in the extreme, being covered with dust and cobwebs.

Having remarked this to my uncle, he replied, 'that it was the Lord's will that there should be different orders of men in the household, and also that every man should receive the honour due to him.'¹ Nevertheless,' he added, 'it should be the desire of every ruler to provide all things convenient in the sight of all men.'²

So we left the chapel, and passed by several small chambers occupied, as my uncle informed me, chiefly by the more sober part of the household, and those principally attached to the doctor and to himself. These galleries were still, and had an orderly appearance; and because they opened upon the balcony mentioned before, a sweet and fresh air ran along them, and here also I heard the notes of certain birds which harboured among

¹ "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." Rom. xiii. 7.

² "Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." 2 Cor. viii. 21.

the lattice work. 'This is the old part of the house,' remarked my uncle, 'and connects with our apartments, but the library stands not on the old foundation.' So we passed on through the galleries, and came again into the more modern part of the building—into wide and gaudy chambers, decorated according to the taste of the housekeeper; and in some of these chambers we met with certain female servants who were in the charge of them. Now I had as yet had little intercourse with the members of the family, nor had I seen any of the female servants, nor so much as heard one of them speak; neither was I now pleased with those I did see, for their dress was any thing but what I should have expected;¹ and they were passing along through the rooms idly, and as if instead of following their business, they were seeking only how they should divert themselves, calling to their fellows, and laughing; as if life and all belonging to it, were but an idle jest, rather than a serious reality. Now I know not whether my uncle would have passed them without speaking, had they let him alone, but it seems they were not so inclined, for he had scarcely come within hearing of them, when one of them calling to him, said, 'So, Mr. Secretary, wherefore do we see you here? we wonder how

¹ "The daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet." Isaiah iii. 16.

you can find time from your serious employments to come so far as this. Well, how go the Master's letters, and when do you expect that he will come and look us all up ?'

' Before you are ready for him, you thoughtless ones,' answered my uncle : ' what account could each of you give of your charge, were he to come to-morrow ?'

' We are accountable to those who employ us, answered one of the most forward of these, ' the housekeeper is satisfied with us, and gives us our victuals and our wages, and what more do we want, sir ?'

' To be assured,' replied my uncle, ' that the housekeeper will always keep her own place, and always be in the same mind towards you, that she now is, and that you may not be called away from hence, by one who is stronger than she is, to give an account of the things you have done in this place.'

' And who may that be,' asked the same young woman.

' The master whom you despise,' replied my uncle, ' hear what he says in his letters, " Behold, I come quickly."'¹

With that there was a burst of laughter among

¹ " And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."—Rev. xx. 12.

² " Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."—Rev. iii. 11.

them, but one said, 'are you sure, sir, those words are in the letters?'

'Sure as I live,' said my uncle, 'and if you will take the trouble to look in the book, you may see them there.' My uncle then offered her a copy of the book, but whilst she held out her hand to take it, her fellows took her by the arm, and pulled her away; however, my uncle said that he should bear her in mind, and take care that she should not hold out her hand in vain. So we went on, and as we were coming down the stairs, whom should we meet on the landing-place but the housekeeper, viz. Madame le Monde herself. I was so all taken aback and astonished at the sight of her, that what should I do but make her a bow, and that as profound a one as I would have done to the king himself; and I have heard it said, that most persons who see her for the first time, are affected in the same way as I was, for she is a most imposing person to strangers, being tall and majestic, seeming as it were to fill the whole eye with the consequentialness of her figure; and then she has a sort of smile, and a glance of the eye, which fixes the beholder, and such a smile of condescension, and so full of meaning, that it would be impossible to pass her for the first time, without being inclined to look after her. As to her dress, I know nothing of what it was then, or what it has been ever since, often as I have seen her, for she is always

varying her fashion ; but this I know, that she is very fond of changeable ribbons and gowns, I mean such as look one thing in one light, and one in another, and that she always wears a huge bunch of keys at her girdle. But withal this, I do not mean to say that she is handsome, very far from it, nay, I have seen her look downright ugly ; yet it is hard, very hard to say *No* to her, when she smiles upon you. However, as she had tried her courtesies with my uncle, till she has ascertained that they are of no avail, seeing that he is upheld by one who is stronger than she is, it was but little that she said to him on this occasion ; whereas she bent the full lustre of her eye upon me, and expressing much pleasure at seeing me, having, as she was pleased to say, heard many things to my advantage ; she added, that she should have the greatest possible satisfaction in receiving me in her apartments, where her daughters would provide a variety of amusements for me, far more befitting my age than could be found in the society of my uncle's room. She was then proceeding to the detail of these amusements, and to state the various agreeable qualifications of her daughters, which she has a way of doing, in common with some other mothers, into whose company I have chanced to fall, when my uncle cut her somewhat short, saying, he was obliged to every one who intended any kindness to his nephew, although at present he could accept of

no invitation for him which might interfere with the service he had accepted, viz. the service of the best of masters ; and so saying, he turned to descend the stairs, motioning to me to follow him ; but as I was slipping by the housekeeper, being near her upon the stairs, she caught the lappet of my coat, and though in such a way as I might have extricated with the smallest effort, one should have thought, she brought me to a stand, and said in an under tone, ‘Remember, young sir, where you will be welcome ;’ which, whisper threw me into such confusion, that I had not another word to say, but this ‘I must needs ask my uncle, madam :’ whereupon she smiled, and laid her finger on her lips, as much as to say, say no more at this time, and I was escaping as fast as I could, when I was almost driven to desire to sink into the floor with shame, to hear bursts of laughter over my head, mingled with tones of contemptuous pity, and expressions to this effect— ‘Well, we know who will be the loser,’ and then again another burst of merriment, though smothered as it were ; for instead of following my uncle, I had stood still on the lower part of the stairs, to look to where the voices had come from, and had discerned in the gallery above, the daughters of the housekeeper all standing in a row against the ballustrades, amusing themselves with me ; and truly, I thought I had never seen a more comely group of damsels, nor any more set

off with the fashion of their attire, or the choice of their colours. But to describe how I was cut and confounded with the ridicule they were passing upon me, would be very difficult; any one might have knocked me down with a feather just then. I have often since thought how like a fool I must have looked, standing there, gaping and staring up at the maidens; neither can I tell how long I might have stood, had not the mother tapped me on the shoulder, saying good humouredly, as I then thought, 'Hear you not your uncle call, young sir? make haste and follow him, and another time let us see how you can return raillery for raillery, and how you can overcome those young girls with their own weapons. Truly, I hope we shall have many pleasant hours together, when you are thought old enough to slip the collar.' So I recollected myself at last, and running down what remained of the steps, I was up with my uncle, who had turned down a long arched cloister where the light was scarcely that of twilight, the door of which was directly opposite to the stairs.

'Young man,' said he, as I came up to him, 'wherefore did you linger behind? Let me tell you, that if you give ear to that woman, you will lay up for yourself such a rod, as you will find it no easy matter to bear;'¹ for I tell you

¹ "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell."—Prov. v. 5.

she has been the ruin of many a one, that is, so far as their present peace is concerned ; for our master will not leave any of his own in her power.¹ Have I not cautioned you respecting her, and told you that she can flatter with her lips, and drop honey from her tongue ?

I made no reply to these words of my uncle, not that my heart did not suggest many things, but that I did not dare to give utterance to them, for I was in fear of my uncle, and more than that, I loved him, and I was moreover more than half assured that he was right, and that his master is the only one in whose service there is peace and safety—I could not then have added, and joy, for my natural corruptions would have led me to have sought enjoyment elsewhere, viz. in the housekeeper's room, and in the company of the daughters, and in the good things which she held under the keys hanging at her side ; nevertheless, I did not speak, and as I walked silently after the old gentleman, the tumult of my mind began to subside, and presently, my thoughts were drawn away from the scene upon the stairs, to other matters ; for there is a lightness in young minds, which leads them from dwelling long upon one set of ideas.

The cloisters were long, and as I before said, very dark, the passage being defiled by bats and other

¹ " Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."—
1 Thess. v. 24.

unclean birds, who inhabit the crannies and nooks of the old walls, and the air was dark and misty. And whereas in the chapel above described, there wanted but the removal of the tablets, set there to please Madame le Monde, to admit the pure brightness of the open heavens, in this part of the house it seemed that the light had been altogether excluded from the beginning. Not that there were not some few slits in the wall, formed as it were for the emitting arrows in case of attack (for this part of the building was evidently prepared both for offensive and defensive war) but as it happened, these slits were of no use to those within, being choked up with rubbish and the litter of the obscene birds which haunted the place. But being entered into these dark passages, I said, 'What place is this? it seems wholly deserted and forsaken of inhabitants.'

'These are the haunts of Father Peter and his followers, and you judge hastily in supposing that they are forsaken; for fallen as the authority of the Father is, yet were he to count numbers with the doctor, I verily believe that there would be found three to one of the household who hold to the former rather than the latter, though there are some who take little heed to either of them, and these are an increasing party.'¹

¹ "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." ² Peter iii. 3.

But come on,' continued the old gentleman, 'you will presently see that this part of the mansion is not so far forsaken as you imagine; and as we go quietly forward, I shall explain to you who this Father Peter is, and whence arose his authority in the house. Now it appears that when our Lord took his departure to go into that far country, from whence we are daily looking for his return, he left unto his servants who had been with him when he was present in this place, this commission,—that they should speak of him to all their brethren throughout the world, promising at the same time that he would speedily send the interpreter to them, who should instruct and direct them in what they should teach: and so saying he departed.¹ Now it seems that the worthy doctor and some other amongst us, took what our Lord said in simplicity, setting aside certain comparatively

¹ "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel: which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts i. 6—11.

small misconceptions arising from human infirmity, for after all is said, we are but poor creatures, slow of comprehension, and weak of faith; but the times were against us, for the old enemy broke in furiously upon us, soon after our Lord left us, and I verily believe would not have left one stone upon another of this our house, had he had his way. This was however overruled, and we were looking for better times, when the enemy changed his politics, and spoke us fair, and then it was that Mr. Fitz-Adam and Madame le Monde got installed among us, and here they have been ever since. Well, these were scarcely set in their seats of temporary authority, before Father Peter, who was a man of whom I had no suspicions at first, began to set up his pretensions, insisting that he was the man, and there was none else beside him, and pretending from a certain passage in our Lord's letters,¹ which have no more to do with him than they have with me or any other man now in the house, that the Lord had given him the rule and dominion over the minds of all his servants. Now his credentials were false, inasmuch as he could not prove himself to be the person to whom the passage referred. Indeed it was well known that he was not the person, but a much younger man, although he had taken his

¹ "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. xvi. 18.

name ; however it suited the steward and house-keeper to uphold him, for he was the best friend they ever had during the time of his power ; and if they found ease and security in their velvet cushions, it was as much owing to him as to any other cause, that is, in reference to second causes ; for after all, it is only by the sufferance of our Master that they are where they are, and not in the dungeon prepared for such as shall be found rebels in the last day.¹ But you would hardly believe, my good nephew, when I tell you, to what an extent this Father Peter carried his authority in the days of his exaltation. It was more then than a servant's life was worth to doubt his perfectability, or to refuse any of his dogmas, or to neglect any of the forms or ceremonies which he instituted. At that period we who refused to submit to his decrees were thrust into holes and corners, from which if we dared to come out, we were cast into dungeons, and made to eat corrupt food, and drink waters which had been fouled, or exposed to ordeals by fire, so that had we not enjoyed the assured hope of final happiness in our Lord, we should have been of all men most miserable.² But our Lord be thanked, this

¹ " And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Rev. xx. 10.

² " If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." 1 Cor. xv. 19.

tyranny of Father Peter is passed away from us, though it is still exercised over the minds of those who as yet have not been able to throw off his authority; but he cannot now as before-time subject us to the cruel bodily torments which he once inflicted. The time was when he had quite shut up the doctor's chapel, and when I was compelled to conceal my Lord's letters, lest he should destroy them; but this tyranny is overpast, and although other evils have arisen in the house, yet they are of a nature much more easily to be endured by one desiring to be quiet than those which have gone before. But,' continued my uncle, 'the error on which the Father built his pretensions, is one which is still entertained by too many amongst us, and is now at this very time held by the worthy Doctor himself, though in a modified form; and it is this—that our Lord having in his letter promised to his faithful servants, a glorious and triumphant season to be enjoyed in this place,¹ we have applied these promises to the present state of things, instead of referring them to the period of the second coming: as if it were possible for

¹ "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." Isaiah xxvi. 1—4.

the bride to rejoice in the absence of the bridegroom, or for the wife to be glad when her husband was far away.¹ Are these things according to the order of nature? and argues it not a want of loyalty to suppose that a royal residence should be gay, when the king is absent? But our king is not only absent, another king rules for a while in his place, and is permitted so to do by a superior power, for reasons which we can only partly understand, but which we shall know hereafter.² Hence, I often tell our good Doctor when he speaks of the superior order of things to be brought about by his efforts, and those of some other of the faithful servants of the Lord, in co-operation with the Interpreter,—Beware of this opinion, for whilst you hold it, little as you suspect it, you are not altogether free from the error of Father Peter. You have changed the actors, indeed, in the work which you and he are presuming on your ability to perform, but you are equally guilty of the same presumption, and err alike in exalting your fellow-servants, and derogating from the honour of the Master.’

‘And how does the Doctor take these home pushes from you, sir?’ I asked.

¹ “And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.” Matt. ix. 15.

² “Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.” John xiii. 7.

‘ Why he does not like them,’ he replied, turning towards me with a smile on his lips, ‘ these home thrusts are not pleasing to flesh and blood ; but the Doctor is a true servant of the Master, and he will assuredly be brought to the truth in good time ; for he does not reject the Master’s letters, but acknowledges that they are the only guide by which any servant in this house should direct his steps.’

We were walking slowly along the cloister, and there was before us a wide folding-door, which was closed, and from whence voices issued. My uncle stopped for a few moments, and said, ‘ Before we enter there, permit me to explain one fact to you : you will be astonished at what you will see within ; there is much to attract the eye and charm the senses in the services within the sphere of the Father’s jurisdiction, and much which is arranged for the delight of the eye, and the fascination of the senses ; but there is one thing, good nephew, which you must understand, viz. that many of our Lord’s promises are couched in figurative terms, in order that under these figures we, whose trust is in him, may be able to understand that which the enemy will not comprehend.’ These figures

¹ “ And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God : but to others in parables ; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.” Luke viii. 10.

being selected by one who possesses all natural secrets,¹ are wonderfully beautiful and skilful in their arrangement, and withal to those whose eyes are opened, contain not only an open and evident sense, but one which is also hidden; that which is evident, being infinitely inferior in value and importance to that which is concealed; the evident being suited to the natural capacity—the hidden, to that which is obtained through the teaching of the interpreter.² Now I would have you to observe, that it has been one of the principal arts of Father Peter, and one in which no doubt he has had no small help from the arch-enemy of the Master, to take of these fair figures and emblems, whereon to build his great system of deception;³ and truly, he has arranged them with great art, as you will presently see—only, as I before said, excluding entirely the hidden import of these symbols, and sticking close to the natural one; thus darkening the promises, and shutting out as it were all future hope, by making

¹ "For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes." 1 Kings iv. 31—33.

² "But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. ii. 9.

³ Ezekiel xvi.

men think that they are to have their good things now, and if they cannot obtain them in the present time, that they are shut out from them for ever.'

My uncle having said so much, was going on, but I caught him by the sleeve, and besought him to explain somewhat more explicitly what it was that he would wish to say, for I was yet in the dark; he stopped at the first word, and repeated all he had said over again, but I was still in a state of ignorance. 'Well,' said he, 'then I must change my manner of speaking. Our Lord has promised (to give you a few examples) a long and lasting peace to his household at some future time; but Father Peter has taken these promises in the first instance, to wit the promises of peace, and honour, and glory, to be enjoyed by this household at some future period, and set them down to the present time, claiming, on the strength of them, obedience to his rule and dominion, and anathematizing those who do not submit to his usurpation. Again, because the Lord has spoken under a figure of his trusty servants, as being his most precious jewels:¹ what must he do, but

¹ "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Mal. iii. 16, 17.

gather to himself all the rich jewels he can lay his hand on, with precious stones, and gold, and silver, and make himself images of such of the servants of the Master as suffered persecution, in the time I have spoken of before of the breaking in of the enemy, and set them about his premises to be worshipped by his people;¹ and again, because our Lord has said, that the addresses of his trusty servants rise up to his throne, like the savour of sweet odours,² what must he do, but build an altar and burn incense before it, with a thousand other impertinences too long for recapitulation, but all of which he is enabled to uphold to his blinded people, by reference to the Master's letters; which, however, I should tell you, he will suffer none of them to hold in their own hands, lest the true light should shine upon them, and they should see things as they are. However, his day is passing away—and yet I almost fear that, that which is arising in his place,³ is but another exhibition of the deadly hatred

¹ "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Matt. xxiii. 27.

² "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Rev. v. 8.

³ "Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent." Isaiah xiv. 29.

which the enemy beareth the Master. If they are pulling down Peter from his seat, I fear that they will put no one better in his room ; for those who are now rising, are for no ruler at all :—and whereas the father exhibited false figures of the Lord, and described him altogether different to what he is, so the party which is now coming in, affect to doubt whether we have any Lord at all ; but so it is to be, and we must be patient.’ With that my uncle opened a leaf of the folding-doors, before which we stood, and thereupon such a light burst upon my eyes, that I could not discern what was before me for some moments : my other senses were also assailed at the same time, for there was a strong odour of incense, and a sort of melancholy kind of song issuing from many voices.

‘ It is here,’ said my uncle, ‘ that Father Peter collects his people, not for instruction, for he gives them none in this place, but for certain forms and ceremonies, which he holds to be absolutely necessary, in order to please and propitiate the master ; the ceremonies, as I before said, being many of them built upon the figurative expressions which are found in the master’s letters, and others being added upon traditions, which the father pretends to have received and preserved from the time when the master was’

¹ “ Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances. (Touch not ; taste not ; handle not ; Which all are to

with us. But now,' he added, 'look about you, and tell me what you think.' I did as desired, and was indeed dazzled with all I saw. We were in a superb hall, of which the roof was supported with magnificent pillars, all wrought and carved, and enriched with various ornaments, such as I had never seen the like for their splendour; and there were many statues and figures of men and women set in niches in the wall: and at the upper end of the hall was the representation of a woman, or rather a queen; and she was clad in a shining garment, and had a crown of twelve stars,¹ and this figure, as I afterwards heard from my uncle, was to represent one whom Father Peter had adopted as his especial patroness. But it signifies little to fill up my volume with all the follies and fancies of this man, trusting as I do to have more interesting subjects for my pen; for when it is once understood that the basis of his system is a false one, and that the kingdom of our master is not of this world,² that is, of this world according to the present order of things,

perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh. Col. ii. 20—23.

¹ "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. Rev. xii. 1.

² "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." John xviii. 36.

it cannot be necessary to spend much time in proving that he has built upon this false basis, must be false too; for although man may build that which is nought on a good foundation, I think it would be no easy matter to build that which is stable, on a false basis.¹ Nevertheless, as I before said, I was much dazzled with what I saw in that place, for there were singing men in the hall, and persons in flowing robes and beautiful mitres, and veiled vestals ranged in long order behind an iron grate, (for these mingle not with the rest,) and persons throwing about incense from a smoking censer, and devotees on their knees, with other surprising things, which, had I not been forewarned and forearmed as it were, would assuredly have misled me, as they have done many others: but I had my uncle at hand to warn me, which he failed not to do from the first authority, viz. my lord's letters.² However he

¹ "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." 1 Cor. iii. 9-15.

² "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holiday, or of the new moon, or of the

did not seem inclined that we should stay long in that place where offences abounded, for he remarked that it would not be pleasing in the sight of the master, that we should do so; ¹ therefore he turned back, and went out at the door by which we had come in. Nevertheless he was willing that I should see one more apartment in this range, and to this intent he led me round another passage, and brought me into a second great hall, the walls of which were covered with an inconceivable and indescribable multitude of strange things, some being set on shelves, others being suspended on hooks, and others being set on the ground.

‘What is all this?’ I said; for the place was obscure, and I went groping and stumbling about,

sabbath days: which is a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances. (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.” Col. ii. 16—23.

¹ “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”—Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

though I saw not but that my uncle walked steadily enough, not meeting with any thing which caused him to stumble.' 'You shall see presently,' said my uncle; and with that he took out a small pocket lantern, with which he was provided, and having struck a light, he applied it to the candle within the lantern, and so gave me the light which I desired.²

'Well,' said he, when this was effected, 'do you see better now, tell me what you behold?'

'I see much,' I replied, 'but to be plain with you, sir, not much which I count of any value.'

'Be that as it may,' replied my uncle, 'this is Father Peter's treasure house, where he amasses and ranges in order, all things which he would have his people count valuable, and worthy of reverence and honour.'

'Rather say the charnel house,' I replied; 'for I see little else but effigies of death, and old rubbish, and lumber crumbling away, and mixing with the dust.'

'That is as you and I think,' replied my uncle, 'but the Father would count us as under the

¹ "Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity: for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon-day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men."—Isaiah lix. 9, 10.

² "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
—Psalm cxix. 105.

worst of condemnations for uttering such a sentiment.' And he was going on to say more, when a very venerable looking person, clad in scarlet, with a sort of crown or mitre on his head, came forward to address us, and that with much blandness and courtesy of manner; and I was presently made to understand that this was Father Peter himself.

It seemed that he knew perfectly well who I was, though my uncle did not name me to him, and called me Mr. Nicodemus, as if he had known me all his life. So my uncle had no more trouble in shewing off the collection, for the Father seemed to have great delight in the work, and grew quite brisk in the idea of having a stranger to exhibit before;—and first he made me to remark certain long rows of shelves fixed in the wall, numbered to eighteen or thereabouts, on which were disposed in order, varieties of dried birds chiefly owls, the oldest of which, (which he pointed out to me as the most precious,) were all tumbling to pieces, being worn and moth-eaten. These he would have me admire, although he did not like my uncle to lift up his lamp to help my discernment, but pushed it down with his hand, saying, 'My brother, you do but perplex the young man's sight.' These owls I found had been the inhabitants of the towers time immemorial; and as my uncle told me, there is scarcely an owl dies in the old building but the Father has him stuffed, and

set in his place;¹ pretending that there is a virtue in the old skins, by the touch of which many grievous maladies have been cured.

When the Father told me this I could not help laughing, thinking he was jesting with me; at which he was very angry, saying something about want of faith, of which however I took no notice. He shewed me also some others of his wonders, but as they all seemed to me to be about of equal value with the owls, I soon got tired of looking at them, and motioned to my uncle to take leave; but we were not to get off quite so easily, for I had no sooner betrayed a wish to be going, than he brought out a huge book bound and fastened with clasps of brass, and saying at the same time, 'This, Mr. Nicodemus, is the true copy of my Lord's letters, which he left to me, with the keys of this castle, (which are and ought to be mine and mine only,²) neither is there any other true copy than mine: hence you, Mr. Secretary, are doing the work of the Master's enemy, in spreading those copies abroad which are known to be spurious, and of

¹ "The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate."—Isa. xxxiv. 14, 15.

² "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19.

which the tendency is to inculcate that which is contrary to truth.'

'Well, be it so, for argument's sake, replied my uncle, 'and let it be granted that the truth lies with you and you only, why therefore do you not labour to spread abroad that truth,¹ and to distribute copies of your book amongst your people? Or granting yet more, according to what I know you would urge, were I to give you space so to do, that the mass of the people would not be able to make a good use of the volume, but would rather wrest it to their own injury, why not in that case as an honest man, take this holy book, and make it the basis of your own public instructions, fairly and openly selecting those parts which you may judge most profitable, instead of teaching as you do the traditions of men,² and thus making our Lord's word of none effect? But you shut up this sacred book, and yet call it the word of truth, asserting that you only possess that truth.³ What have you to answer for in thus

¹ "But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."—Matt. xxiii. 13.

² "Ye hypocrites! well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—Matt. xv. 7—9.

³ "Woe unto you, lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."—Luke xi. 52.

doing!' With that my uncle turned away, being vehemently moved. Nevertheless, as he went out at the door, he looked back, and spoke as one who regretted that he had been led to an expression of too great heat, for he wished the Father a good day, adding a prayer that he might be led, ere it might be too late, from the error of his way. And so we passed out; but as we were returning, my uncle informed me that but little of that part of the house which Father Peter called his own was built on the old foundation, or within the old wall of the castle, but that it had been added from time to time to the principal building, and though not by any means so large as it once was, it is yet of greater magnitude than the rest of the house.

When we were quite clear of the domains of Father Peter, I began to make my comments on what I had seen; and should, no doubt, have run to great length with them, had not my uncle rather repressed their exuberance, by bringing me, as his manner generally was, to first principles.

'Nicodemus,' he said, 'when the foundation of a house is bad, what is the use of arguing or commenting on the disposition of the chambers

¹ "And it came to pass, after all thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord God,) that thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thee an high place in every street. Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms." —Ezek. xvi. 23—25.

above? or again, if a worm has gotten to the root of a tree, what signifies lopping, or pruning, or grafting? I tell you, that the Father Peter is building on a false foundation; or rather, to put emblems aside, acting on a false principle. I fear that there are others, and I am sorry to name the good Doctor among them, who in one point of view, that is, as it refers to things temporal, are quite as mistaken as the Father himself. They err in this one point, and that is, they expect through their own exertions, and that of their followers, to establish a paramount rule on earth; and be it for their own aggrandisement, or be it for that of their Master, as they would pretend, (or, to judge them more kindly, as they would make themselves believe,) the pretension is arrogant, contrary to the express written will of the Lord,¹ contrary to the experience of those who have gone before,² and contrary to the hopes and expectations of all those who have been truly instructed by the Lord the Interpreter.³

To all this I had nothing to say, for I was by no means convinced that my uncle was right; so

¹ "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—Heb. xiii. 12—14.

² "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep your's also."—John xv. 20.

I held my tongue. We passed next from out of the house into the inner courts, where we had many opportunities of observing the spirit of the rulers of the household—their system being that of pampering the superior servants, and indulging such even to excess, whilst the fare of the inferiors was scanty even to the extreme, their very countenances exhibiting the tokens of hard living and severe labour, at the same time that the surplus of the upper tables was cast rather to the dogs of the family, than to the beggar at the door.¹ Neither could it be questioned but that every species of dishonesty and pilfering were then, and are still, as much exercised by the oppressed orders, as riot and profligacy are encouraged by those who oppress.² Hence I observed that in the lower offices of the house, the conveniences were bare and few, and in fact all I saw was so offensive and disgusting to me, that before I passed out from the courts, I broke out again in expressions of doubt and dissatisfaction: ‘And this,’ said I, ‘is the purchased possession of a Master, such as you, sir, say there is not the equal any where. What then are the tokens of his love to his servants? I must not doubt your word, uncle; but I would simply inquire, if such persons exist in the

¹ “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”—Matt. vii. 6.

² “For in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.”—1 Cor. xi. 21.

house in any numbers, how is it that I should not yet have fallen in with any of them ?'¹

'Simply,' replied my uncle, 'because they are the hidden ones.'²

'I do not quite understand you, sir,' I replied.

My uncle sighed, as if oppressed by my unbelief and slowness of comprehension, and then spoke—'I know not wherefore I should be impatient with you, Nicodemus, for not comprehending what no human wisdom could help you to understand, for these things can only be explained by the Interpreter himself; although, we, the servants of the only true Lord, are commanded to teach, to exhort, to reprove, humbly awaiting the kindling of that fire for which we can only prepare and collect the dead coal.'³ Nevertheless, I am inclined to say, Why are you so slow of comprehension? why must I repeat this truth so often to you, that the rule and do-

¹ "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, . . . Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."—1 Kings xix. 14, 15, 18.

² "Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones."—Psalm lxxxiii. 1—3.

³ "There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it."—2 Sam. xxii. 9.

minion is not at this time in the hand of the Lord, but that he, for purposes which as yet, we (even those who have been brought to place our whole confidence in the promises) cannot fully comprehend, has delivered this dominion into other hands,¹ viz. the hands of him who having been his enemy from the beginning, obtained his first footing in this place by subtilty and hellish craft,² and hath ever since kept that place amongst us; insomuch so, that the faithful servants of the Lord have never yet been able to make head against them. Neither indeed can it be expected that they ever should during the absence of their Lord, inasmuch as we acknowledge no head but him, nor look for any perfect union of our members, but with the head;³ and hence it has always been found that every attempt to muster and organize, as it were, the party of the faithful in this house has always failed. In general this failure has been occasioned by two circumstances, the first

¹ "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."—Matt. iv. 8, 9.
 "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John xiv. 30.

² "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"—Gen. iii. 1.

³ "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."—1 Cor. xi. 3.

and most fatal of which has ever been the arrogance of some one or other of the members themselves; and the other, some trick of the enemy, by which he has found means to slide in some of his own party into their councils and assemblies.'

'This,' said I, 'is a lamentable state of affairs: and is there no hope of a present amendment?'

'Things must remain as they are,' replied my uncle, 'as I have told you many times before, till the Master comes,—then all will be right.'

'And what is required of us under these circumstances?' I asked, speaking somewhat fretfully.

'We must stand in our places, and do our own work, the Interpreter being our guide and director, and not be quitting our own especial duties to set the world upon wheels, which will never go round. I tell you, nephew, there is enough for you and I and ten thousand more to do in the place which the Lord has appointed us; and remember that it will be time enough to muster and count numbers, when we see our Lord's ensign on the hill.¹ Do you not know, that the numbering of the people is no concern of ours, neither is it agreeable to the Lord,² that we should

¹ "And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly."—Isalah v. 26.

² "And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly."—2 Sam. xxiv. 10.

meddle therewith? Cannot you credit our Lord's word, who asserts in his letters that his people are more in number than the sand of the sea?¹ And I much doubt whether this is a boast which the enemy will be able to make in the long run, although the odds seem to be much in his favour at present.'

'Well,' I replied, 'to be plain with you, uncle, I do not see the wisdom and the policy of all this; to be sure the Master ought to know his own affairs best, but why and wherefore he should give the enemy time to strengthen himself, and to increase his numbers, I cannot see. Why should the Lord delay his coming? Why does he not make speed and appear amongst us, and set all things right at once? Truly I cannot see the wisdom of this, nor the sound policy; in short, uncle, I do not understand it.'

My uncle seemed to have some difficulty to restrain himself to hear me out, (for to be sure I was speaking with gross presumption,) however, he so far commanded himself as to reprove me mildly, bidding me look to a certain clause in the Lord's letters,² and then adding, 'You talk of

¹ "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies."—Gen. xxii. 17.

² "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Rom. ix. 20.

wisdom, young sir, but you forget mercy; our Lord is merciful; and what, I ask, were he to come at this moment, what might you expect, who have dared thus to speak of the Master? See you not that it is in mercy that he delayeth his coming, in order that he may give space for such as you to be brought to a better way of thinking through the teaching of the Interpreter.'¹

I was silenced by this remark, for it occurred to me then for the first time, that the Lord delayed his coming,² not from any disregard to the sufferings of his people, but to give the more time and space for the repentance of those who were disobedient; and I know not that any thought which was ever put into my mind worked more effectually with me than this in bringing me into the right way, though, as will be seen hereafter, it was very long before my stubborn will submitted itself to that of my Lord. All this time we had been sauntering through the outer court, and we were now come to the castle gate. It was a

¹ "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."—James v. 7.

² "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you."—2 Peter iii. 13—15.

strong, well-fenced gate, and there was a porter's lodge on the side of it, but the gate was swinging backwards and forwards, as if no one cared whether it were open or shut;—so my uncle called to the porter,¹ but he did not appear either at the first or second call, and then came out stretching and gaping like one roused from sleep. Moreover, I saw that he was accompanied by several huge dogs who came out with him from the lodge, but not a cur amongst them wagged his tongue, though I was as strange to them as to their master.

‘The porter should watch, and the dogs should bark,’ said my uncle, as he passed on, ‘but our watchman sleeps, and our dogs are dumb,² but it will all be set right when the Master comes.’ So we passed on, and presently we had left the house behind us, and were got into the gardens, which were various, and in places very beautiful; though it struck me that nature had been strangely violated about the new parts of the castle, and opposite the principal windows of those parts, —every tree being cut and trained into artificial forms, different species being grafted on one stock, and the very earth being cut and carved into

¹ “For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.” Mark xiii. 34.

² “His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.” Isaiah lvi. 10.

such shapes and forms, as left nothing but sharp angles and straight lines over all its surface. Then there was not a point of view in which some object of art, some statue, or flight of steps, or ballustrade, or obelisk, or artificial grotto, did not present itself to the eye ; quite destroying the simplicity of natural scenery, and substituting the works and devices of man, for the beautiful images of nature. I observed also that an abundant stream of water, which ran from the mountains into the garden, was tortured, and twisted, and partitioned off unto such a variety of ramifications as soon as it entered the pleasure ground, that it wholly lost its freshness in traversing so many artificial mediums, and before it passed out into those portions of the garden and parks which were less disturbed by the hand of man, its waters were so foul that they were unfit for drinking ;¹ and hence, as my unclé told me, the servants were obliged, if they wanted a draught of pure water, to send for it to the fountain itself. ‘ And who,’ said I, as I looked around me upon all these fantastical distortions of nature, and ill arranged productions of art, ‘ whose whim has this been, to spoil nature’s works so effectually, and at such immense cost, as must have been used here?’

‘ Whose,’ replied my uncle, ‘ but the house-keeper’s, together with the Father Peter, when

¹ “ As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there : all my springs are in thee.” Psalm lxxxvii. 7.

he was in his best, or rather I should say, his busiest days: for there are some people whose busiest days are not their best. Madame, as we call her, pretends to a fine taste, and it would be almost high treason in this house to question her pretensions of this kind; however, you shall judge and compare those parts of the domain where she has exercised her skill with those which have remained here as our Lord left them. So we passed on, and leaving the more public parts of the park and gardens behind us, we entered upon a more solitary portion of the domain,—a sort of wilderness,¹ indeed it first appeared to me; but it was nevertheless, uncommonly beautiful, and it was scattered with little cottages, which, as my uncle said when he pointed them out to me, were as the nests of doves in the holes of the living rocks.²

‘This,’ said my uncle, looking around him with delight, when he found himself in the bosom as it were of this beautiful region, ‘was a favourite place of my master’s when he was last with us; and there are many of his servants scattered here and there in those quiet resting places among

¹ “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Rev. xii. 6.

² “O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.” Solomon’s Song ii. 14.

the rocks ;¹ though I do not say that all here are faithful to the Master, no more than I would say that all there (pointing to the castle, whose towers were seen beyond the groves, through which we had just passed,) are unfaithful to him. No where in the present state of affairs can we say that our Master's party is without a mingling of the other, any more than we could assert that there is any place, chosen and favoured of the enemy wherein to set his seat, where there may not be a sprinkling of these before you, and on the right hand and the left, and above and below. See, how rich is that verdure of the valley at your feet ; and see, how the torrent which comes tumbling over the heights carries fertility into the meadows, which extend themselves on the distance as far as the eye can reach beyond the openings of the hills. Then again, look at the rugged heights, those bulwarks of rock, scattered with every variety of beautiful tree,² affording shade and refreshment to the little cabins of the peasants ; there are many in those cottages who love the Master, and who, though oppressed by their

¹ " I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought." Hosea xlii. 5.

² " Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season ; his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Psalm i. 1-3.

present rulers, and condemned to scanty fare, are content, nay, full of joy¹ in the hope of the speedy return of the Lord to comfort his people, and to establish his own dominion. It is this that the old people speak of to their children, teaching them the songs which will be sung when he appears, and, pointing to the snowy mountains which you may see beyond the woods, not on the verge of the horizon, but as it were lifted above the clouds which rest upon the horizon; over which, as we are informed by the Master's letters, he will appear at his second coming, and from whence we shall hear the rushing of his chariot wheels, sounding as the thunders of the heaven.²

My uncle then directed my eye, and I saw for the first time a range of sparkling peaks, lifted above the clouds, yet distinguishable from the clouds which rolled over their bases, by their fixed and never-varying forms, and the more solid brilliancy of their appearance; and behold these mountains lay towards the east, from which quar-

¹ "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Psalm cxxi. 1.

² "He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind. And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them." 2 Sam. xxii. 10—15.

ter my uncle informed me, that the master was to come.¹

My uncle then passed up a narrow winding path formed in the woods, beautiful from the variety of lovely flowers, in its vicinity, harmonious from the song of doves,² and the rush of waters, and fragrant from the breath of May blossoms which filled the air;—passing on, he took several cottages in his way, where he stopped to give a word of comfort to one, a word of exhortation to a second, and a volume of his master's letters to a third. In all these he was greeted with love and joy, and I perceived that the coming of the master seemed to supply the subject of many discourses, all agreeing in speaking of it as a thing earnestly to be desired.

'Well,' said my uncle, as he left the last of these, 'are you satisfied, nephew? are you convinced that the master has many people, where you thought that he had none? But now,' he added, 'our affairs call us home, and we must not lose time, for I have business to do at a greater distance than this: I must be up in the morning and away; I may be absent several days, and

¹ "And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east; and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory." Ezekiel xliii. 2.

² "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Solomon's Song ii. 12, 13.

must leave you, but I have endeavoured to convince you, that there are many here on our side, and I have shown you also whom you would do well to avoid. I further advise you to keep in your own place, and on your own post when I am gone; and I shall leave you without fear, knowing him to whom I have entrusted you, and that he is faithful, and will preserve you unto the end.’¹ He then spoke of the Interpreter, and of his secret intercourse with the Lord’s people; I told him of my dream, or vision, or whatever it might be, which I had had when I first came to the house; whereupon he smiled, and said, ‘It is well; he will not leave the work he has commenced unfinished till he has you confirmed in the right way,’² and thus discoursing, we reached our apartments.

My worthy uncle took his leave of me at day-break on the following morning. I perceived that he had a wallet on his back when he came to my bed-side to say good bye, and I asked him what he had therein: he soon made me to understand that that scrip contained copies of his lord’s letters, which he was about to dispose of in the remoter part of his master’s territory: so he

¹ “The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.” Psalm xxxiv. 22.

² “For whom he did foreknow, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Rom. viii. 29, 30.

blessed me, and departed; and I, turning myself in my bed, thought that there would be no harm in availing myself of his absence, to take more rest than he would have permitted me, had he been present, for he had the way of constantly saying, 'The time is short, the time is short, up and be doing, for we know not the day nor the hour, in which the master may come.' So I slept long and late. Whilst I was sitting at breakfast, behold there was a gentle tap at the door, and who should enter when it was opened, but the doctor, inquiring after my uncle.

When I had made him understand that my uncle was gone out, and explained the motive of his journey, 'That,' said the chaplain, 'leads me at once to explain the motive of my visit,' and so saying, he came in and sat down, adding, 'that he was glad of the opportunity of speaking to me, before he delivered his message to his venerable friend.'

'And first, my young sir, I would say to you, that I am, and long have been, extremely hurt and concerned, to see your worthy relative spending himself in a service which is too much for him: the people on this estate have greatly increased within these few years, and many of them are sadly ignorant of their master's will, as declared in his letters. I have indeed laboured for

¹ "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matt. xxv. 12.

years, to make them acquainted by word of mouth with his will, and have exerted myself, (though it becomes not me to say so,) beyond the example of the present times, but still with the feeling, the depressing feeling, that it is impossible for me to do all, nay, half that is required; at the same time I have felt, that, in days so enlightened in all other respects as the present, it is a shame and disgrace to every ruler of this family, to permit such ignorance of the will of our lord, to continue to exist.


‘ I have therefore, Mr. Nicodemus,’ he added, (for by this time he had learned my name) ‘ after much and deep consideration matured a plan in my mind, which if I am duly supported, where I have the best right to expect support, will be effectual to disperse the clouds of darkness and error which hang upon many of our dwellings. I have already consulted many of our friends upon it, and have been encouraged in quarters where I expected nothing but a contrary conduct, for I have so far prospered in my poor endeavours as to have been enabled to engage Madame le Monde on my side, and not only Madame le Monde, (who really possesses many excellent qualities when she can be induced to lay aside some unfortunate prejudices which she possesses in common with too many other persons of her way of thinking,) but also that worthy, though mistaken old man, Father Peter, and that highly

intellectual character the Librarian,—which last person enters most warmly into my plans, complimenting me on the idea, which he calls a novel one, and giving me credit for exercising an influence beyond what has ever been exercised before in the household, auguring from this happy dawn the full blaze of a day in which a spirit of brotherly love will become universal amongst us, and in consequence such a rapid advance in the intellectual progress of our little society, as has never yet been experienced in the history of the family.'

The chaplain was proceeding, when I begged him to have the great kindness just to inform me, before he went on to speak of the other people's opinions of his plans, what these plans were, and what they had to do with my uncle?

'My plan,' replied the Doctor, 'is to form a sort of association amongst ourselves, that is, amongst us the rulers of the family, including Mr. Fitz-Adam, Madame le Monde, myself, the Librarian, Father Peter, and your uncle, for the instruction and improvement of the inferior servants; and the first step we wish to make is, to relieve your uncle from the very heavy weight which has hitherto, to a certain degree, hung solely upon him, of copying and dispersing the Lord's letters. Not that every person has not at present the liberty of doing this to any extent he may please; yet your uncle has always been

considered as the person authorized by our rulers for this purpose ; and as it is impossible for him to do the work to the extent of the present demands, I have been led to consider,—whether it might not be possible to form a company, to use a mercantile phrase, whose object should be, to facilitate the multiplication and dispersion of these precious documents, at the same time promoting by this proposed union in which all our united efforts will tend to one point, that spirit of brotherly love and concord which every lover of our Lord must earnestly desire to witness. Such is my plan, and I must inform you, that the housekeeper told me herself but yesterday, when I intreated her to give me her company with that of her daughters, at a meeting which we are about to have on the subject which is so near my heart, that I had so clearly stated the effect that such a combination of all parties in one object would have in promoting brotherly love, that she could not refuse her countenance to my plan ; hinting at the same time that I had obtained so much influence over her, that I could persuade her to any measure I thought right, and she was pleased to say that a subject treated and handled by me, was altogether a different thing from the same subject handled by another. And now, my young man,' continued the Chaplain, ' I am come with the hope of inducing your excellent uncle to fall into our views ;



and although I was at first somewhat disappointed in finding him from home, yet on second thoughts I believe that it is for the best that it is so ; for though one of the first and most excellent of men, he is, as you must have perceived, a man of singular and peculiar notions, stiff in his opinions, and any thing but accommodating to those of others.'

' Had it not been for him, Mr. Nicodemus,' added the Doctor, growing somewhat warm as he continued to declaim, ' for *him*, I say, and such as *him*, we should have brought many plans to bear which would have added much to the peace of the family, months and months ago. Father Peter was formerly a great hindrance to us, and being in great favour with the housekeeper and the Intendant, he was as firm to the full in his way, as your uncle and his party are now in their way, and we were torn to pieces by contentions. One room, nay, one house was at one time too small to hold us all, and your uncle being determined, the weakest was well nigh driven to the wall ; but Father Peter is now entirely changed, and, as he told me himself but yesterday, ready to fall into any thing for the promotion of the Master's interests which I might suggest ; and the Librarian on his part is all anxiety for the good of the family ; and the steward does not interfere, nor will not, so long as we have the housekeeper on our side ;—so that

if your uncle, who is a sort of leader of a certain party, would but accommodate a little, we should be a family of brotherly love, and have little else to do than to promote the welfare of our poor fellow-servants, and to correct all those disorders which have arisen from ignorance of, and inattention to, the Master's wishes, as expressed in his letters.'

'My good sir,' I replied, 'I do not quite understand all these matters, nor do I exactly know what you are aiming at.'

'Not know what I am aiming at, my young friend!' replied the doctor: 'why in one word, what I am aiming at is neither more nor less than such a general reformation of the manners and morals of this house as may be pleasing to the Master when he comes, not to abide with us here, but to judge us.'

'But sir,' I replied, 'I understand from my uncle that no such general reformation can be expected whilst the persons now in command shall continue to rule.'

'Then,' said the doctor, 'if our rulers are of a spirit which cannot be reformed, (which, by the by is, I think, a very uncharitable supposition,) we have nothing to hope but that the government may pass into other hands.'

'Into the hands of the Master himself, when he comes, perhaps, sir,' I said.

'Pshaw,' retorted the doctor, 'there speaks Mr.

Secretary, by the organs of his nephew. What! have you in this short time imbibed the idea that the Master will actually, after such treatment as he has received in this place, degrade himself so far as to come and live with us, in order that he may set all things to rights in his own proper person? Let me tell you, sir, that there is no foundation whatever for this absurd notion; though there is every reason to believe that a very superior order of things will be established hereafter in this place, but not by the personal interference of the Master; and it is for the promotion and advancement of this happy state that I am now labouring and have laboured for many months, and as Mr. Librarian said but yesterday, not without my reward; for see we not already the dawn of a better spirit in the house, of a spirit of love, of union, and of concord, the result of which, when perfected, will be the establishment of peace, and the promotion of all those beautiful feelings of charity, tenderness, and kindness by which the inevitable evils of life are soothed and smoothed down, and that state of blessedness restored of which we read in the earlier communications of the Master.'

'And my uncle,' I replied, 'will, you fear, prevent all this good, by his pertinacity to his own opinions. I am very sure, sir, that he will have nothing whatever to do with the Librarian or Father Peter, beyond the common interchanges

of civility and neighbourly kindness. I have heard him say, that they are neither of them staunch to the Master ; and that is a point in the character of any one which is a sine qua non with my uncle.'

'And you think that he is right in displaying a stiffness which may keep a wanderer out of the fold when he might be tempted to return, young man?' asked the doctor.

'I am not defending him, I am only stating a fact, sir,' I replied.

'And you do not agree with your uncle in all his peculiar opinions?' he asked.

'I believe,' I replied, 'that there is but one legal and lawful Lord and Master of this house, and that this Master is he who called me to this service, and that all who set up another Master are liars and deceivers.'

'Heaven forbid,' replied the doctor, 'that I should have a disloyal thought respecting our Lord and our Redeemer,' and the poor man looked about him like one scared at the bare suggestion that it was possible for him to have uttered a word of disrespect, as it regarded the Master, 'He that knows my heart, knows that I love my Master, and look with hope to meeting him again ; and have a delight in his service ; and am anxious to advance his kingdom ; but as I said before, I cannot go hand in hand in all your uncle's opinions, and I must say that I least like

that harsh and illiberal spirit which he betrays when he would rather spend his last breath in labours to which he is not equal, than accept the assistance of one whose opinions do not entirely acquiesce with his own. But come,' he added, 'enough of this; I am departing from my own principles in speaking thus harshly of an uncle to a nephew. After all, I believe the Secretary to be a truly upright man.'

So saying, he rose to go away, yet not till he had invited me to return his visit at any hour which might suit me best. Now when the chaplain was gone, I was left alone, musing on many things, and as it were considering who was right and who was wrong in the points so forcibly contended between the doctor and my uncle, or rather so violently and angrily upheld on the part of the doctor. And behold, as I sat musing, my eye being upon a sheet of paper on which I had begun to write a portion of the Master's letters, I thought that some one read aloud in my ears, and with a force and emphasis which I had scarcely ever heard used before, a certain passage which I had just written, and the passage was to this effect—"Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching." I have no doubt, as I have since thought, that this was the Interpreter who had spoken these words in my ears; though when I turned round to see if any one was near me, I saw no one; but

had I obeyed the voice, come from whence it might, it would have been well for me : nevertheless, I was not inclined so to do ; my uncle was out, and I was not disposed to work, and I had wasted the first hours of the morning in sloth, and this was but a poor preparation for an active day. So I endeavoured to think that I had been mistaken in supposing I had heard a voice ; and taking up a flute which I had brought with me from that far country in which I had formerly dwelt, I began to amuse myself with some idle measure, such as I had learnt in my former services ; and having pressed a few notes, was about to change my strain, when I heard, or thought I heard, a musical instrument at some distance, carrying on the same air. I soon put down my flute, and listened and felt assured that I was not mistaken ; so what must I do but spring up from the desk where I was seated, and run out at the door into the passage, where I heard the music so distinctly, that it seemed but a step before me. Nevertheless, as the passage turned and winded among the offices, I could not see the person who was playing upon the instrument ; so without waiting to consider what I was going to do, I hastened to follow the musician, who still passing on, though unseen, led me quite away from my own place, into that part of the house occupied by the housekeeper. There, coming into a sort of centre place into which many of the offices opened,

I was standing as it were at a fault, knowing not which way to turn, when the housekeeper opened the door of her room ; and seeing me, she affected a sort of wonder, which I verily believe she did not feel, and addressing me as if I were the dearest friend she had on earth, nothing would satisfy her but I must step into her apartments and give her some of my good company. I felt, as she took me by the arm to draw me towards her, like a silly bird caught in a net ; and yet I know not how it was, I had no more power to resist her persuasions than if I had had only the sense and strength of an infant : hence, from my own experience, I would advise every young man who values his peace to avoid the very sight of these smooth-tongued and honey-lipped personages ; for many have fallen down ruined by such.¹ However, as the saying is, I was in for it, fairly or foully I know not which to say ; and the next minute I found myself seated on a sort of sofa at the side of this woman. There was no other person in the room but Father Peter, who was dressed as I had seen him before, and looking as if in a state of

¹ " My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee."—" That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words."—" Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend unto the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she has cast down many wounded : yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Prov. vii. 1, 5, 24—27.

perfect contentment, being esconced in a downy chair, and talking at his ease. He knew me immediately, and addressed me courteously, asking after my uncle, calling him a worthy man, and falling immediately upon ordinary topics.

The housekeeper seemed to be pleased to see us on such good terms, and paid some handsome compliments to each of us, the tendency of which was to recommend us, as both being worthy, to each other's friendship ; after which she added, ' But, Mr. Nicodemus, this being your first visit, you must not refuse to taste of what I shall set before you.' So saying, she arose without heeding my protestations that I wanted nothing, and selecting a key from the large bunch which always hung at her girdle, she went to one of those many repositories of good things with which her apartment is lined, and taking from thence a silver cup, she filled it with some sort of wine which was very sweet to the senses, but which had as I afterwards found, a strange effect on the head.¹ And when she had set it before me, with certain spiced² biscuits of a very agreeable flavour, she proceeded to lead me on to enjoy myself by the sprightly turn which she gave to her discourse ;

¹ " With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." Rev. xvii. 2.

² " The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants : they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold." Ezek. xxvii. 23.

for I promise you that she has a most wonderful command of the tongue, for whilst she appears to abandon herself to the most unscrupled and free discussion on every subject which is brought forward either by herself or another, she measures and weighs every word so seriously, that there is not a monosyllable which proceeds from her lips which does not fall on the side she would have it. Nay, when she wishes it, she can make her very words of praise fall into the scale of condemnation, and her expressions of disparagement into that of justification; so that her enemies have as much reason, or perhaps more, to dread her praises than her censures: and then there is a sort of magic as it were in her tongue, and in her manner, which makes her auditor to forget her age, which is certainly on the decline, although her dress is very artificially arranged so as to conceal those defects of her person which she would not desire to be noticed. Some say indeed that she was never handsome when seen in broad daylight; but her apartments are to the north, and the windows so constructed that the full glare of day never glances upon them. So when I had taken one sip by her persuasion, I found myself more inclined to take another and another; and when I had well drunk until my head became confused, why then she opened an inner door of her apartment, and taking me by the hand, led me into the room where her daugh-

ters were sitting, saying, that as other avocations demanded her attention, she would turn me over to her young ones, for, added she, 'We claim you for our own this day. The worthy man,' your uncle, is from home, and if he has left you a task to perform, you must rise the earlier and work the harder tomorrow.' Now tomorrow is a great word, I afterwards found, with the housekeeper when the master's business is to be done, as to-day is the word she selects when her own affairs are to be attended to. So saying, she shut the door upon me, and I found myself in the apartment of the young ladies,² to wit, the housekeeper's daughters.

And I promise you that I thought it a delicious place, for the multitude of delights that were gathered together, such as hangings of silk, sofas

¹ "So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, dilligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey. He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks. Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life." Prov. vii. 18—23.

² "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." 1 John ii. xvi.

of down and velvet, fragrant odours, pictures and statues, and all sorts of musical instruments. But to speak of the three damsels ;—the eldest was remarkable for her gracious and winning manners, for she came forward and took me by the hand, and led me to the best seat, assuring me of my welcome, and giving me to understand that it was she who had enticed me from my hermit's cell, as she was pleased to call my uncle's room, by the sweet tones of her lyre. The second was no less remarkable for her beauty and the richness of her dress ; and the third, for her commanding and majestic figure, although at the first sight she did not take with me as did the other two. After a while however, she won much upon me, I must acknowledge, to my reproach ; for before I had heard her talk for half an hour, she made me quite ashamed of my service with my uncle—saying, that a fine young man, such as I was, ought to seek a situation more befitting for him ; and adding, that if I were but so inclined, she would speak a word for me to Mr. Fitz-Adam, and he would make me one of his own particular attendants, to ride out with him, and to accompany him in his field sports, of which he is particularly fond, and to be as it were, his companion in those exercises which suit a young man better by far than being nailed to the desk, driving a quill through all the labyrinths of such dry insipid speculations, as old and dull heads only have a taste for. And then the

second sister described the accoutrements and appointments which I should exchange for my suit of russet gray, and the gallant steed which would be given me ; whilst the elder spoke with a sort of loathing, of the joyless life to which my uncle condemned me, comparing my dull hours with the gay progress of each day spent in the service of the steward.

Now I expect that my reader will think that I had travelled pretty smartly along the wrong path during the few short hours of this morning, but every traveller knows that the downward road is easy enough. Ask any one who has been labouring up a lofty mountain with many a weary, and mayhap many a sore footstep, panting and striving, and being ready to give up the toil as not to be endured, how he feels himself when the downward path lies steep before him, and he has naught else to do but to jog cheerily forward, with the fair valley before him, where he hopes for ease and refreshment, and perchance the company of such as he likes, and perhaps on afterthought, it might be proved that I had not made such a vast progress in the evil way all at once as at first appears ; for whoever has read the former part of my memorandums with any thing like attention, must have seen that I was very well prepared for closing in with the temptations which those who did not love my lord had prepared for me. I had been out of humour, and

dissatisfied with the restraints which my uncle had put me under, and I know not any state of mind better prepared for the reception of an evil impression, than that of dissatisfaction with a man's outward circumstances, more especially when that dissatisfaction has no rational ground or foundation. So I wore out the forenoon, nay, and for that matter, most of the afternoon, in talking with these three daughters of the house-keeper; and when it was getting towards dark, who should come but Mr. Fitz-Adam, the steward, knocking at the door, and asking in a sort of jocose way, such as he often was in the habit of using, if there was room for him in the company.

I had heard so much of Mr. Fitz-Adam, that I started when the young ladies called to him by name, bidding him come in, as one who always made himself agreeable; nor was I altogether at my ease when I saw him enter, eyeing me as if were askance, as he stepped forward to pay his compliments to my companions; and I am sensible that my manner betrayed the awe which I felt, though I did not mean it should do so, for the young ladies laughed, and the eldest said, 'Mr. Fitz-Adam, here is one who is under no small agitation at your presence, not having as yet had the honour of being introduced to you; whereupon he smiled, and gave me his hand. But I must remember that I have not yet described the stew-

ard, a negligence which, if not amended, may justly displease my reader.

Mr. Fitz-Adam is by no means young ; nay, if what is said of him by those who don't like him, and yet would scorn speaking an untruth of him, is worthy of credit, he is as old as any man in the house ;¹ neither has he any right they say, to add the Fitz to his name, being come of a spurious branch of a family which was indeed of exalted origin, and still in the elder branch eminent above all others,² but having for his immediate parents a rebel on the father's side, and one broken off or disowned on that of the mother,³ whereas the Fitz or Fids in heraldry, ought to designate a distinguished birth, although, in imitation perhaps of our steward, it has too often been used where it ought not to be. However this may be, this Mr. Fitz-Adam, by some called old Adam, is in fact very far from young, although he carries his years so remarkably well, that he has not a sign of age about him : his hair is black as a raven, and he stands as firm as a rock, and the strength of his arm is what no one can withstand

¹ " That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."—Eph. iv. 22.

² " Which was the son of Enos, which was the Son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."—Luke iii. 38.

³ " And say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem ; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan ; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite."—Ezek. xvi. 3.

that is unassisted. Nevertheless, as I have heard some say who know him best, Mr. Fitz-Adam owes much of his comeliness, (for some think him an exceedingly comely person) to his dress, which is always much studied and very neatly arranged, and to the smoothness and complaisance of his manner ; for unless he is quite put beyond himself, he is particularly complaisant, more especially in the presence of ladies, and as it was in their company that I first met him, I saw him to the best advantage, that is, in his most gracious mood. Now when I was introduced to him, he at first made as if he did not understand who I was ; but seeming presently to recollect me, he inquired politely after my uncle, and asked me for what reason I had kept myself so close since I had been in the house ? I gave for my reason for so doing, my uncle's wish that I should keep to my desk. In reply to which, he smiled and said, ' Come, come, young sir, that won't do ; you know better. Your uncle is said to be a worthy man, and our master has not a more faithful servant than he is thought to be ; but he has his prejudices. Yes, Mr. Nicodemus, (for he was pleased to call me Mr. who am no Mr. or Master,) he has his prejudices, and amongst some others of less consequence, he cannot be made to believe that there are any persons in this house, but himself, and two or three more of his particular intimates, who hold firm to the master ; and if we

have not the master's name always between our lips, which I for my part consider to be taking a great liberty with that noble name, then we are unfaithful servants, and care more for our advancement than our master's good, and I know not what, all which has no manner of foundation, in truth or common sense.' He was as his way is, beginning to chafe himself with his own words, when one of the young ladies pulling him by the sleeve, made him mindful of her presence, whereupon he changed his tone, and having taken a place on the sofa, was beginning a sort of idle discourse, such as some ladies love, when Madame le Monde came in to say that the dinner was ready in the hall. Upon hearing this, I was starting away, on which I had every one upon me, and the housekeeper would not hear of my going away, nor would any thing else serve her, but I must take the hand of her eldest daughter, and lead her into the hall after herself and the steward, the rest of the company following in the rear.

I do not know that I ever felt myself more out of my place in my life, than I did as I led the lady, or rather as I should say, was led by her (for she rather took my hand than I did hers) into the great hall, the bell in the tower tinkling away all the time to let the people know who was going to dinner; and when at length I came to the hall, and saw all the superior servants of the house

gathered round the long board, and the serving men in their blue coats and badges, standing in order, against the wall, ready to fetch and carry as required, I was fairly out of countenance; especially when I saw among them the young man who waited on my uncle, and who, as I thought, looked somewhat comically at me, as much as to say—‘ So you are taking advantage of the first day of the old one’s absence, to make a holiday, and to follow your own inclinations: now we shall know of what stuff you are made, Mr. Nicodemus.’ Thus I thought that the looks of Theophilus said all this, and much more, and this conceit put me out more than ever; and no doubt I made an awkward figure enough, when desired to take a seat near the head of the table, in a chair of velvet well padded and cushioned, and one in which a much larger man than I am, could turn about and loll at his ease. I suppose my looks said, What have I to do here? for the steward turned to me, and smiling with his lips only, as he has a way of doing, ‘ Mr. Nicodemus,’ he said, ‘ we have given you your uncle’s seat, which I am sorry to say he never occupies, for as Madame le Monde could tell you, he is very sparing of his visits, and,’—He was going on to say more, when the housekeeper took him up, saying, in her ready way, which is very taking in general to strangers, ‘ Well Mr. Fitz-Adam, now that the chair is so well and so handsomely filled, we will say nothing

of its having been so long left vacant.' What could I do in return for this compliment, but bow my head; whereupon the three young ladies smiled, and looked me hard in the face, which made me blush, though I hardly knew wherefore, and so, what with one thing and what with another, I was so thoroughly put out, though pleased enough all the while to find myself so handsomely treated, that I could think of nothing to do for a minute or two, but to fumble with the napkin which lay upon my plate, turning it about and about, and then spreading it upon my knees as I observed the doctor and others doing with theirs, in order that they might be ready to receive any crumbs or drops of gravy which might chance to fall whilst they were feeding themselves. In the mean time, that is whilst I was thus employed, there was a great stirring and tramping about me, and when next I looked up, all the persons who were to dine were seated in their places, and in the order I shall describe. Those persons who have read histories of ancient customs will understand what I mean when I say that one part of the long table stood upon a dais, or in other words, on a part of the floor of the hall which was raised as much as a foot from the other part. This dais, was covered with a carpet, while the lower end of the table stood upon the bare stone pavement, and whereas at the upper end of the hall there were chairs set for the company, well quilted and lined according

to the dignity of those for whom they were set, there were long benches without backs at the lower end; and moreover the dishes were all set at the upper end, from which the messes for each person were sent down,—their measure and quality being adapted by Mr. Fitz-Adam and the house-keeper, according to their situation in the household, or to the favour in which those, for whom they were intended, were held by the ruling powers, and I promise you that few of those who sat below the dais knew more of the dainties served up at the higher table than what they could gather from the odours which were emitted by them. Now I should say that all the principal servants and officers of the household, with all such as were in favour with the steward and housekeeper, had their places at the upper table; whereas the lower servants, and those who were not thought much of by the great people, sat below the salt, for just at the division between the upper and lower table, stood a huge salt-cellar; hence it was, and is to this day, a common saying in the house, ‘Such a one is below the salt, and such a one is above the salt.’

Now as I had before said, they had put me in my seat (for although the great people in the hall hated my uncle, and had tried often to deprive him of all honour and respect, yet because the Master had given him his place they could

not dispossess him of it,¹) and as this seat was near the top of the table, and because the hall was long, I did not discern much of those who sat below the dais; but I knew most of those who sat in the places of honour. At the head of these was Mr. Fitz-Adam, with Madame le Monde at his right hand; then came the doctor, Father Peter, the housekeeper's daughters, and the librarian, and some others of whom it is not necessary to speak; for it seems that this was a particular day, and that many were present that day in the hall, who were absent at other times, the doctor having expressed a wish that the servants might be thus assembled in order that he might have an opportunity of inviting them to a meeting which was to be held the next morning. There was one person, however, who sat above the salt, whom I had not seen before; neither did I know her station in the house at that time, though I have known her well since, and she is one of the most worthy of the household, that is, speaking as men speak, for we are all unprofitable servants, if we speak with reference to the Master. This female, however, of whom I was speaking, I thought looked as if she had been brought where she was by compulsion, or as if led there rather by a sense of duty, than by her own free will; and accordingly, she had an uneasy manner,

¹ "The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground."—Psalm cxlvii. 6.

and appeared as if she felt that she was not looked upon with an eye of favour by those at the head of the table. They called her Grace, giving her the title of mistress, but she, as I observed, sat uneasy, nor did she speak till called upon so to do. But I had almost forgotten to remark, that independant of those persons at the table who might be actually said to be servants of the family,¹ though nominally servants of the Lord, there were several persons who were there by the favour of Mr. Fitz-Adam and the housekeeper,—friends and relations of theirs, and for the most part inconsiderate light sort of looking gentry, who did little else than applaud those who gave them their loaves and fishes; the places of these were between the superior and inferior servants:—but to return to myself, such was the company which I saw around me when I had gathered courage to look up. And if the company were large and various, I surely had never seen more excellent dishes than those which were set upon the board, all smoking hot, and emitting each a most savoury odour; there was some sort of huge joint set before the steward, who, as he sharpened his knife on a steel placed before him for the purpose, sucked in his lips, and asked the Doctor

¹ “And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.”—Micah v. 7.

where he would please to have a slice, calling upon him at the same time to agree with him in saying, that a finer haunch had seldom invited a hungry appetite.

‘ True,’ replied the Doctor, ‘ and we must not forget our remembrance of that indulgent Master, at whose expence we are to enjoy this feast.’

‘ Very good, Mr. Chaplain,’ said the Librarian, ‘ every man for his own trade ; the shoemaker praises his leather—the blacksmith his iron—the cook his good dishes—the author his books—and the chaplain his patron—all as it should be ; is not it so, Mr. Fitz-Adam ?’ and he gave a nod, or rather a knowing wink at the steward, who, having returned the wink on that side of his face, not seen by the Doctor, said, ‘ Very true—all very right, Mr. Librarian, to be sure, the Doctor should not forget his patron ; but I have some notion, nevertheless, that some of you would sing somewhat small, if our good things depended wholly on the person to whom the worthy chaplain has alluded ; and if I had left the noble animal from whom this limb has been lopped, to range the forest unprovided with fodder, our venison to day would, I suppose, have been less juicy and savoury, than it now promises to be ; therefore, I venture to hint, now that thanks and commendations are afloat, that some of them ought justly to rest upon the shoulders of Adam Fitz-Adam, my Lord’s steward.’ So saying, he drew his knife

across the haunch with a practised hand, and laid open several inches of delicate fat. The Doctor looked aghast at the steward's speech, but recollecting, perhaps, that the present was a sort of feast of charity, and fearing to destroy the work already so far advanced, and one from which he anticipated much good to the family, he seemed at a loss what to say; but, looking around him with an expression of real distress, he was reproved by the female mentioned above, who in a low, though decided tone, said, 'And ought we to sit here enjoying the good things which the Lord has provided, and suffer our fellow-servants to deduct in the smallest degree from the honour due to the giver of all our good things? What have we, which we have not received, and what merit of any kind can we call our own?' Does it become us to take credit to ourselves, as if we are, or ever could be anything?''²

'What is that you are saying there, Mistress Grace,' said the steward, 'let it be spoken aloud for the good of the company.'

Surely, thought I, she will not have the courage to do as was requested of her; but I was mistaken, for being thus called upon, she spoke aloud that

¹ "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."—Psalm l. 10.

² "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it."—1 Cor. iv. 7.

which she had before said, as it were, aside to the Doctor. On hearing this, the steward's colour rose from its usual ruddy hue, almost to purple, and setting his teeth, he was about to issue his commands, that the offender should leave the hall, when Madame le Monde interfered ; and, laying her hand on his arm, she whispered to him something which I did not hear ; on which he turned to the Doctor, and, with a laugh which I thought sounded hollow and unnatural, as all laughter must do, which does not proceed from a merry heart, he said something about women's tongues, as being licensed, and hence incapable of giving serious offence, and begged the worthy Chaplain to pledge him in a glass of wine, adding these words, ' There are indeed some things, Doctor, in which you and I do not think exactly alike, and yet I verily believe that our opinions are more in unison than may at first appear ; at any rate, there is one thing in which we entirely coincide, and that is, in our wish to see every member of this household united in one bond of fellowship.'

Many persons present echoed this sentiment, and the Doctor himself was not behind in so doing ; yet he seemed to sit uneasy, and wriggled in his seat, as if his velvet cushion were set with thorns. However, had he been so inclined, he had no leisure given him to speak, for the Librarian was addressing Mrs. Grace, and because no person at the table ever ventured to speak so freely as he did

on certain subjects, Mr. Fitz-Adam seemed to be mighty well pleased to see his enemy in such hands.

Now I had often heard my uncle speak with horror of the Librarian, as being a man who entertained the most false and mischievous opinions of any person in the house, with the exception of Mr. Fitz-Adam himself, and one who even went beyond the Steward in his open avowal of these sentiments; being a character which could not blush, and could not be moved, or be put out of countenance, and whose delight it was to do mischief for mischief's sake, without other fee or reward, or the hope of either; but it had never as yet happened to me to see this man in his true colours, and verily I was shocked and amazed at the questions he put to Mistress Grace.

‘And do you really believe, madam,’ said he, ‘that the person you call Master, takes any account of what is going on here? how is he to know what we say or do? or what power would he have to revenge himself, if he were offended, seeing that he is gone from hence, and is to us as one dead? I know,’ added he, ‘raising his voice at the same time, what you would answer to all this, I have heard the arguments you would use a thousand times before, but I would ask you this simple question—If this man whom you call Master, is such as you say he is, why does he not come, and take the power into his own hands, and set down all those who pre-

sume to question his authority, placing you wise ones at the head of affairs? We should then see how nicely every thing would be managed: but let me beg of you to answer me one question,—Have not things gone on just in the same way, as long as any of us can remember, and what reason have we to think that they will not continue to go on in the same train, that is, without any other changes than may be produced by superior light and knowledge, until the end of the chapter?'¹

Here the librarian seemed to have run himself out of breath, for he had said much, much more than I have put down, and Mistress Grace had just opened her mouth to answer him, when Mr. Fitz-Adam struck the table with a force which set every thing to dance on the board, and thundering his commands, he insisted that the harmony of the company should be disturbed no more by these vain disputes and unprofitable arguments; and thus the poor woman was silenced, but I saw that her honest and loyal feelings towards her rightful master worked within her so violently, that she could neither eat nor drink whilst she had some difficulty to prevent the tears from gushing from her eyes; neither did I think that the doctor was much more easy than

¹ “ And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”—2 Peter iii. 4.

she was, though he had to put a good face upon it, having his object in his head, namely, the bringing all the persons in authority in the house to assist him in the work he had projected for the benefit of the household.

I do not remember any thing else worthy of note during the dinner, excepting that Madame le Monde and her daughters, after the discussion above spoken of had been put an end to, took pains to make themselves agreeable ; and as the cheer was uncommonly good, as I remarked before, so we presently became very merry,¹ that is, at our end of the table, for the bottle went freely round even before the cloth was drawn. However, just before the repast was finished, the doctor, in a general address to the company, requested the presence of every person in the hall, in his own apartments the next day at noon, in order that every one might hear a proposal which he had to make, which he trusted might tend very greatly to the benefit of the family. The housekeeper, in the name of all the females, and Mr. Fitz-Adam in that of all the men, accepted the invitation, and immediately afterwards all the women, together with the young people and inferior servants, left the hall. But whilst I was preparing to accompany them, Mr.

¹ "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee : and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties : for they are deceitful meat."—Prov. xxiii. 1—3.

Fitz-Adam very politely insisted on my remaining where I was, adding, that he was so much pleased to see my uncle's chair so well filled, that he wished I would not suddenly deprive him of the satisfaction. I felt it impossible to make any other reply to this flattering speech, than by remaining where I was, for I had not yet received strength to say No, when duty required that I should. I therefore sate where I was, though knowing full well that I was not acting properly in so doing. So as I said, only a few of us being left, Mr. Fitz-Adam winked to Father Peter, for the steward has a great way of making himself understood by winks and inuendos,¹ whereupon the father got up, and having disappeared a while, presently returned with certain bottles of wine, which having opened, he poured into a large silver cup,² which he gave us to drink. Now it is necessary, that, in order to explain this, I should inform my reader, that the father at one time claimed the privilege of keeping the key of the wine cellar ; but because it was found that

¹ " A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers ; frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually ; he soweth discord. Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly ; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy."—Prov. vi. 12—15.

² " And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air ; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."—Rev. xvi. 17, 19.

he made great gains,¹ by endeavouring to sell that which the servants had a right to without payment by the charter of the house,² the key was after a while taken from him, and he was permitted only to keep the command of a particular bin, the wine of which is of a peculiar quality, and though most pleasing to the taste, most injurious to the constitution.³

So as I said, the father filled the cup, and it was handed round, but the doctor passed it, alleging that he had drank sufficiently, and it would have been well, had I followed his example, but I was tempted by the sparkling colour, and so quaffed a large draught,—which I had no sooner done, than I began to see the fine wrought ceiling of the hall under my feet, and the figures of my companions so mingled, that I could not tell one from the other; and presently all sorts of strange and gaudy fancies began to fill my mind, and I thought myself superior to other men, and, as it were, winged and lifted into the clouds;⁴ after which I fell fast asleep in my easy

¹ "Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants: they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm."—Ezekiel xxvii. 17.

² "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."—Isa. lv. 1.

³ "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter."—Deut. xxxii. 32.

⁴ "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath

chair. How long I slept, I know not; but when I opened my eyes, it was dark, and there was no one in the hall but the steward and the father, and they were talking together in under tones. The few words which I heard the steward utter, fixed my attention, for I had slept myself sober; I therefore lay quiet, and was supposed to be still asleep.

‘The plan of the doctor,’ said the steward, ‘is an invention of his own brain, in order, no doubt, that he may increase his popularity. If he resembled the secretary in his utter contempt of all honour which does not proceed from him he calls master, and if, in short, he did not resemble other men in the desire of making himself a name, we should have no more hold upon him than we have upon the secretary. Madame le Monde was the first person who pointed out to me the advantage we might derive, in attacking him on this his weak side, and hitherto we have caught him every where, by following her suggestions. For instance, where he had established a school,—

‘Which was done,’ remarked Father Peter, interrupting the steward ‘in opposition to me.’

‘True,’ resumed Mr. Fitz-Adam, ‘it was so in some degree, but, as I was saying, when he established

redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eye shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.”—Prov. xxiii. 29—33.

his charity school, for his school is, you know, for the lowest of the people, viz. the strangers and orphans on the estate, what must we do, (or rather Madame le Monde, for I give her the credit of this contrivance) but affect to patronize it with all our influence; in consequence of which, the poor doctor was so flattered, that he permitted Madame to nominate the teachers, and in some degree, to recommend the books. The consequence is this, father, (and the steward laughed, and sipped his wine, and laughed again,) that this same school which has been in action several years, has actually, and in bona fide, turned out more individuals attached to me and to my person and my party and my principles, and those of Madame le Monde,—I say more individuals, in the proportion perhaps of ten to one, attached to me and to her, than to the other party; and the best of all is, that the *worthy* chaplain—he loves to be called *worthy*—vaunts himself on the great good his school has effected, and prides himself on the efforts he has made for the advancement of his master's kingdom; for it is one of his speculations, that we are all to be converted one day or another; and even the great Fitz-Adam, and the superb Madame le Monde, the venerable Father Peter, the Librarian, and all of us are to be converted, and through his means no doubt; and then we are, masters, and servants, and all together, to be as the shepherds and flocks of the

golden age, living in all sweet simplicity, and having no other pleasure or delight, than in singing the praises of the lord of the land, to the notes of the good doctor's harp; for of course he must lead the tune, or it would not be right. Such' continued Mr. Fitz-Adam, 'are his dreams and speculations, but I much fear, could he bring his pastoral visions into effect, he would find one character rather more allied to that of the wolf, than to that of the shepherd of the flock.'

'He builds these speculations,' replied Father Peter, 'on certain messages in the lord's letters, wherein, under language somewhat figurative indeed, we who are learned in these things, have been made to understand that the master's servants are to be gathered together as sheep, under one shepherd,¹ in the latter days, and to live in peace, and repose every man in his own place; neither do I doubt but that he supposes that he himself is to be the shepherd, who is to gather and feed the sheep, and to rule them with his pastoral staff.'

'Whilst you rather think, I make no doubt, that that honour is reserved for yourself, father,' replied the steward.

'I do,' returned the Father, 'and though I am now in the shade, yet the time was, in which I was acknowledged to be the only pastor of the

¹ "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—John x. 16.

faithful flock, the representative of the master, and, in fact, his vicegerent in the house.¹ And I even remember the period, Mr. Fitz-Adam, when you and Madame le Monde bowed to my sway.'

'Be that as it may, father,' replied the steward, 'you and I were always upon the whole tolerably good friends; and to tell you the plain truth, I cannot say that I ever found your influence so galling to me as that of some of those who now set up to be teachers. You never gave me half the trouble that even this silly doctor does. To be sure, you are as you say, now in the shade, but times may mend;—but to go on with what I was saying, I have explained how we counteracted the doctor's influence in the school; since the establishment of which, he has had several other plans which we have found means of rendering null in most instances. And now arises this new chimera,—this scheme for giving every one a copy of the Lord's letters, as they are called, for every fool to interpret his own way, and hence to think himself privileged to act according to his own interpretations. I am sure, father Peter, you are not one who would approve of a measure of this kind.'

'Certainly not,' replied the father, 'certainly

¹ "And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows."—Dan. vii. 20.

not: for I hold that nothing can be more dangerous than to allow uninstructed persons to read those letters. But permit me to ask you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, if you disapprove of this measure, why do you give your countenance to it? why do you mean to honour it with your name, and that of Madame le Monde's, and why have you persuaded me to be present at the meeting?'

'Why indeed,' replied the steward, 'why should I wish my friends and myself to have fingers in the pie which this pragmatist fellow the doctor has compounded, unless I had flattered myself that our whole hands might go in after them, and when that is done, if we do not spoil the dish, we are not so clever as I take it we are.'

'But might it not answer, just as well,' returned Father Peter, 'if you were to use your authority to quash the business at once. Give me only a little of your countenance, and I am assured that there are many individuals in the family whom I would bring to reason, or at any rate terrify into some sort of submission to old authorities.'

'The times will not bear it,' replied the steward, 'the march of intellect is such, Father Peter, owing in some measure to our improvements on the good doctor's outline of general instruction, that you cannot rule the house with your bugbears as you formerly did, and frighten the grooms and house-maids with your stuffed owls,

and bats, and dry bones, as you did in the olden times:—the people have more sense. And the other party,' he added, lowering his tone, 'are fearfully increased, and are daily increasing, and would indeed have multiplied, as far as I can see, to the utter subversion of my authority in this house, had we not found means to have turned the doctor out of his course, and stopped him short as it were in his career; for when first restored to his place, and set in authority in the house, he put me in fear, I can tell you, for he was for pleading the cause of him he calls Master, in season and out of season. But Madame le Monde was my best friend on the occasion—and to do her justice, she managed him much better than I could have done; for what must she devise, but pretend to have been convinced by him, and so taking hold of him by his weak side, viz. his vanity, she contrived to put it into his head, that he had already arrived at the perfection of his ministry, and having done so well hitherto, he must not advance one step further, lest he should offend, and so drive many from him who were now his sincere admirers and followers. So he was induced to draw in his horns by her gentle touch; and as we had anticipated the fears and doubts suggested by Madame le Monde, viz. the fear of injuring his followers by injudicious exposures of the truths contained in the letters of him, by some called Lord, and the doubts of the

effects which might be produced on the servants' minds by such exposures, gradually worked upon his own mind, and cooled his zeal, rendering him such as you now see him, a troublesome pragmatical fellow indeed on some occasions, but one whom I have made more useful, than any man in the house, in checking the forwardness of the Secretary and his party, who, after all, are the persons most to be dreaded by me, because that we have hitherto found no device by which to turn them from their purpose. Such being the state of the case,' continued Mr. Fitz-Adam, 'having consulted my friends, we have been inclined to adopt a new system¹ which has been in preparation and in action for some months past, though not so fully as we trust it will be in the sequel.'

'You mean,' returned Father Peter, 'your system of liberality and universal toleration, than which a more accursed system never entered the brain of man. I tell you, Mr. Steward, that mildness never has answered, and never will answer with these head-strong gentry. What has awakened this spirit of rebellion among the people, but the relaxation of discipline? What have the ignoble vulgar to do, to think for them-

¹ "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John viii. 44.

selves? From what proceeds this spirit which has been awakened among the servants, but from the schools of which you speak, and from which, with all the boasted influence of *Madame le Monde*, you have not been able to exclude the Lord's letters, entirely in opposition to my advice and counsel?'

'I tell you,' said the steward, 'that there is a necessity to bend and accommodate to the times. You attribute those results to our places of education, which had taken effect before the doctor had even thought of these seminaries for the rabble. Who or what awakened that spirit by which you were shaken in your seat of authority, and the old chaplain restored, as it were by force to his place, and required to read the letters in the hearing of the servants? I say, who awakened that spirit, Father Peter?'

'It was when that spirit was first excited, that you should have exerted yourself, Mr. Fitz-Adam,' said the Father, 'and had you then listened to me, I should not have experienced that change of circumstances which I now have daily reason to deplore.¹ For, oh! how fallen, how changed is my condition. When I compare the present with the past, and consider how it once was with me, when my will was even a

¹ "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! . . . Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols. the worm is spread under thee, and the

law with you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, and when Madame le Monde bowed to my nod, I certainly cannot but weep, and lament, and expostulate against every change which renders my hope more distant.'

'Your hope!' returned Mr. Fitz-Adam, 'well, at least you must acknowledge that you have had your day; and also that if the party of him whom some call Master should entirely prevail, you would be worse off than you are now; for I tell you that they meditate little else, but ousting you altogether.'

'Mr. Fitz-Adam,' returned the father angrily, 'he to whom you refer, and whom they falsely call Master, is the person from whom I receive my authority, and of whom I am the vicar and delegate in this house, and whose seat I occupy in the midst of the people; ¹ and it is in his name,

worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?'—Isaiah xiv. 4, 11—17.

¹ "Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God, Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said,

and with his prerogatives, that I rule; and he that disputes my authority I pronounce accursed.'

'So you made many of us believe, in the time that is passed,' replied the steward, 'and truly at one time I found it hard myself to resist your claims; and you know perfectly well, that this is the point on which you and I quarrelled. You did assuredly at one time take strange state upon yourself, and lorded it over the house far more than was agreeable to me; pretending that I received my authority from you, and even interfering with what I should eat, and what I should drink.'

'And if I did so,' replied the Father Peter, 'did I promise you nothing in return for your submission? Did I not undertake to stand between you and the Master, and to keep the peace for you—insomuch so, that whilst you held to me and were as it were under my protection, you were at liberty to please yourself, and to enjoy your good things with Madame le Monde, and to solace yourself with the damsels her daughters, without any dread of being called to account at any future

I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God."—Ezek. xxviii. 2.

² "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."
—1 Tim. iv. 3—5.

time. Now I ask you what promise or prospect of this sort does the doctor hold out to you. Does he presume to stand between you and the Master, or to supply you with any means short of implicit obedience by which you can avoid that reckoning, which, let me tell you, Mr. Steward, will make you and Madame le Monde look about you, come when it will, and no one knows how soon it may come?’

‘ Well,’ said the steward, ‘ let every man look to himself in that great day. As to the doctor’s opinions respecting it, I never comprehended them rightly, inasmuch as he contradicts himself whenever he speaks upon the subject, sometimes upholding one thing and sometimes another; sometimes maintaining that we are all to be called over the coals and punished for ever for the smallest fault, and then saying that those who love the Master, are just for party’s sake to be forgiven every thing :—with other such contradictory stuff which is hardly worth repeating. But the thing I like least in the doctor is this, that with all his shew of humility he is full as ready to take any advantage in advancing his own influence in the house as ever you were, Father Peter. I am fully aware that circumstances do not allow me to resist him openly and to put him down with his followers, as it were with fire and faggot; otherwise I promise you I should soon quash this foolish plan of his for disseminating

the lord's letters. But not having that power, I have had recourse to other measures. I have consulted the librarian, a man who is in better possession of the popular opinion than any one in the house, and he has undertaken to slip in a word or two into the letters, which may alter the sense in very important particulars, without being observed by the doctor and his party, or which may bear an argument if observed; for as you well know, Father Peter, the original manuscripts are somewhat obsolete, and it may be well believed that some of the words may bear various constructions.'

'Various and very false constructions have already been placed on many passages by the secretary,' replied the father, 'and the doctor has adopted these erroneous copies. If I could prevail to have the copies which are disseminated taken from my manuscript, which is the only authentic one, I should have less objection to the doctor's plan than I now have.'

'Well,' replied Mr. Fitz-Adam, 'I have no doubt but that I shall be able to incline the doctor to allow your party to have your own copies; and with the address of the librarian, on which I greatly depend, I trust that we shall be able so effectually to clog the wheels of this great machine which the chaplain is erecting, that little else will proceed from it than clatter and confusion. But the doctor loves a noise of his own

making ; and if there is rattle enough, he will not presently find out that the hammers do not strike where he would have them : he is not half so wise in his generation as you were, my good father. Only conceive what the old fool said to me the other day. I had affronted him, I suppose, for he was very hot and angry ; and he told me as much as that I was utterly vile, and that I had not power to obey the lord's commandments in a manner acceptable to him, that it is in my very nature to resist them, that I cannot do well even if I try,¹ and that it is useless for me or any such as I, to make the attempt ; and then the next moment he turned upon me with his exhortations and preachments, all of which tended to prove that if I did not do what he said I could not do, I should assuredly be cast into a dungeon, from which I never must expect to be set free.² Now as you remarked before, although you did take state on yourself in your day, and was troublesome enough in consequence to me, yet you were by no means so worrying as this fool of a fellow is. You were not always dinning these strange

¹ "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."—Rom. viii. 8. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh : and these are contrary the one to the other : so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17.

² "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse : for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10.

contradictions in my ears, which supposing them to be true, only go to prove that their boasted lord is what he says of himself, a hard master.’¹

‘And so he is,’ replied the Father Peter, ‘to those who will not accept the salvation which is offered to them; and the conditions of which are constantly tendered to them by me, who am, as I before said, the vicegerent of the lord in this place.’

‘As you say,’ replied Mr. Fitz-Adam, ‘and as I once believed, to my comfort and consolation, and I almost wish that I could believe you still, my good fellow; for truly your doctrines were comfortable to flesh and blood, savoury and relishing to the senses. But the librarian has entirely destroyed that illusion, not only in my mind, but in that of the larger part of those whom you counted among your followers in the house; in so much so, my good father, that I verily believe that many of those even who fill the best places under you, would cut off their badges, if they did not find it their interest to keep them on.’

‘The librarian,’ returned the Father, ‘is therefore to be accounted as among the accursed.’

‘And the more so,’ said the steward laughing,

¹ “Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed.” Matt. xxv. 24.

‘because if I remember right, he was nursed and reared in your apartments.’

‘Beshrew you,’ replied the father, ‘he was no nursling of mine.’

‘Well then,’ returned the steward, ‘fame must be set down as a liar; and not for the first time, for this librarian is not the eldest of your hopeful progeny according to her; but he is a son, Father Peter, whom you need not be ashamed of, and you will do well to close in with him in the measures we now propose, for he is the rising sun of the house, I can tell you, and not one to be lightly set by. I can tell you that he is an especial favourite with the housekeeper, and her three pretty daughters.’

‘Well,’ said Father Peter pettishly, ‘what is all this to the business now in hand; that is, this assembly proposed to be held to-morrow.’

‘Much,’ replied the steward, ‘much, as it refers to the line of conduct which we are required to adopt. This silly fellow, the doctor, must be counteracted in some way or another; and if we cannot manage him by open violence, as you propose, we must have recourse to other measures. The doctor is a man sincerely attached to his master: you know well that he has stood fire and faggot for his sake before now, and would do so again, were it to come to open war; and yet he is not able to detect our manœuvres under the cover of gracious words. I have found repeatedly, and

Madame le Monde can tell you, that if we do but expostulate in his presence on subjects of philanthropy, universal love, general improvement, the bettering of the condition of the lower sort, &c. and give him some credit for the great works which he flatters himself that he has performed, (for his own merits after all is the handle by which we turn him about,) we may actually invade the rights of his master before his face, and he will hardly perceive it. Nay, if he does perceive it, he may be soothed and stroked down again by some small concession or another, which Madame le Monde knows how to make, whenever it suits her interest.'

'But,' said the Father Peter, 'why all this to do about the doctor; you are giving him too much consequence, Mr. Steward, and strengthening his hand by so doing.'

'As to the doctor, considered as an individual, Father Peter,' returned the Steward, 'I think little of him; he is a shallow fellow, and knows not how to make out his own case to any advantage, for I much doubt whether he himself understands the letters on which he builds his preachments, and as I before remarked, his statements are full of contradictions; but then he has a number of followers in the house. His admirers are exceedingly numerous, and we must not make enemies of them. The servants, especially the lower sort, have lately shewn a most dangerous spirit, hinting

that they do not see why those upon the dais are to feed upon dainties and drink the best of wines, whilst they are to eat brown bread, and sup from wooden bowls. These are perilous times,¹ Father Peter, and the utmost skill is requisite to enable me to keep the balance of power, and to maintain things as they ought to be.'

'Nor do I see,' replied Father Peter, 'that things are maintained as they ought to be; the truth is daily losing ground, and I feel myself as it were already reduced almost to a cypher, whilst every step you take seems to remove my hope still further.'

'Because,' replied the steward, 'your authority was always imaginary and never substantial, and I certainly do see that it never can be restored and set on the same footing as formerly, therefore what is the use of chafing yourself: eat and drink, for to-morrow the master may come,² and then, as we all cannot but know, there is one party only which will be found right.'

'I grant it,' replied the Father, 'I grant that amongst all these differing opinions, there can be but one party who holds the truth: but I do not understand which party you refer to; for let me tell you, Mr. Steward, you have such a way of

¹ "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." 2 Tim. iii. 1.

² "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. xxiv. 44.

being all things to all men, that even those who know you best may often be at a loss to know what you really think.'

'Hear then,' replied the steward, growing warm, 'hear then my real sentiments, and tremble at the truths which will fall from my lips,¹ for they have a frightful interest for us all. Who is the man whom they do not affect? I know that the day will come, nor do I know how soon, in which we shall all be called before the master;² at which awful period all who have not been staunch to his interests must abide the terrible consequences:³ these are truths which cannot be controverted.'

'And hence,' said the Father, 'they should be ever kept in mind, and those merits towards the master should be acquired, by which his servants may be enabled to meet him with confidence when he shall appear.'

'Yes,' returned the steward, 'by pleasing and paying court to Father Peter. Every man to his trade; but let me tell you, that it is not such as you are that can heal the wound or build up the

¹ "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James ii. 10.

² "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Rom. xiv. 10.

³ "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." John xv. 6.

breach¹ that is between me and him they call master.² 'Neither,' continued the steward, 'growing hotter as he proceeded, 'although this is a language which Madame le Monde is not fond that I should use, I do not say that I have any desire that this breach should be healed; for even could we in any way be made partakers of his kingdom, that is of the kingdom of him they call lord, when he comes to take the reins in his own hands, I do not understand how I should gain by it, for his service is irksome to me even unto loathing,³ and there are no emoluments, as I can understand, worthy of my pursuit under that Master, nor any enjoyments under his rule and dominion in which I can participate.⁴ Be that however as it may,' he added, 'I hate to think of these things, I hate the person of him whom they call the Lord,⁵ I hate his people,⁶ I hate his

¹ "So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the sodering: and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved." Isa. xli. 7.

² "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." 1 Peter i. 18.

³ "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans viii. 7.

⁴ "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14.

⁵ "The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil." John vii. 7.

⁶ "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." John xv. 18.

laws—and though I perish, I will hate him to the end—and I will hold possession in this place to the last moment—and I will counteract him—and I will trouble him—and I will contend with him—and I will strengthen my party—and when he comes, he shall find that which shall grieve him,—and as he continued to speak, for he added certain blasphemies against the Lord, which I could not presume to repeat, I could hear the gnashing and grinding of his teeth, as of one in a fearful rage. I was pleased, however, to hear the Father reprove him, though I liked not the manner of his reproof, for he rather chided him on the impropriety and imprudence of allowing such sentiments to break from him, than exhibited, as he ought to have done, the folly, and deep depravity, and disloyalty, and malice of these sentiments. So no more was said at that time; only the Father excused himself from personal attendance in his robes, as the Steward had recommended, at the meeting the next day, promising, however, to be present incognito; and so the conference broke up. And surely such a conference had never before taken place in my hearing.

Being left in the hall, and my mind being filled with many strange and perplexing thoughts, I was minded to slink away privately to my own room, and had actually got into the passage with that intent, when suddenly the sound of music came stealing upon me, and the next minute a

bevy of young damsels, led by the housekeeper's eldest daughter, broke out upon me; and partly by fair speech, and partly by a gentle force which I had no power to resist,¹ they dragged me with them, and thus I was induced to finish the day in dancing and revelling, and all things which are not convenient.² The night was far spent when I returned to my room, and oh! how sad and solitary did that large dark room appear; but not so dark, and sad, and deeply gloomy as my own heart—for this inquiry was continually suggesting itself to my mind, If I refuse the favour of the Lord on the terms which he has offered to me as stated in his letters, and wilfully offend after having come to the knowledge of these terms,

¹ "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." ² Peter ii. 18—22.

² "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying." Romans xiii. 12, 13.

what other means of being saved can I have recourse to?¹ I then, as I well remember, apostrophized my uncle as if he could have heard me, saying, 'Oh! my uncle, my uncle! Why did you leave me in this dangerous house, and yet did I not blame you in my heart for keeping me apart from these people? Was I not disgusted at the quiet, and comparatively pure and holy life you compelled me to lead? Had I any apprehension that I should so soon, and so entirely fall?' and I struck my hand upon my forehead, and fell prostrate on the ground, crying, 'Oh! what a wretch am I; what a miserable, sinful wretch!' and then I lay awhile on the floor, but after a time, I got up, weeping as I was, and stretched myself on my bed, where I fell into a heavy dose, in which I had many dreadful dreams; but after sun-rise, as I suppose, I fell into a sounder and sweeter sleep; and then it was that a vision presented itself to me, such as I never shall forget,

¹ "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb. x. 26-31.

though I should despair of describing it; but I thought I saw the Master, the real Master, and his appearance was wonderfully beautiful, and he motioned to me to follow him; and at the same time I heard a voice, which said, 'My son, are you in trouble? follow me, and you will find consolation.'¹ I was in tears when I awoke from this dream, and my tears continued to flow even whilst I was dressing; neither had I ever felt in all my life in so strange a way. But I remembered that I had promised to be present at a meeting during the morning, and I found that it was late; I therefore breakfasted in haste, and struggling hard against my feelings, which seemed to be more like those of a little child,² than a man, I hastened to the appointed place. It was in the large apartment appropriated for the use of the Doctor, whose office it was to read the Master's letters to the assembled household; a very convenient room for the purpose in agitation. At one end of it was a sort of platform or stage; and at the other, convenient seats, ranged in a sort of semicircle, the seats nearest the platform being appropriated for the superior members of the household; and those more remote, for the

¹ "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28.

² "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Mark x. 15.

inferior. Madame le Monde and her daughters were in the first row, all handsomely dressed, and looking very graciously; immediately behind them sat the females next in degree, amongst whom I distinguished the meek and modest Mistress Grace, with some others; and so on according to the different ranks, for I saw in the ranges behind many of the very inferior servants and tenants, with others from the village. Now, the persons on the platform were these; first, Mr. Fitz-Adam in the chair, which, by the by, he filled well, being, as I before said, a comely personage at a distance, though not so well on very near inspection, and he comported himself with great dignity, his features being set to a becoming gravity, only that I thought there was something of a knowing twinkle now and then in that eye which was turned towards the company, and more especially when directed towards Madame le Monde and her daughters. Besides Mr. Fitz-Adam, there were on the platform the Doctor, Father Peter, the Librarian, and two or three more of the elders of the household whose names it needeth not to repeat, though I should not omit to mention one in particular who attracted much of my attention, being a plain elderly man, in a sad coloured suit, whom I understood to be a respectable tenant on the estate; the doctor addressed him during the meeting, by the name of Master Simon. The mass

however of those on the platform were made up of the young men, for the most part nephews and cousins of Mr. Fitz-Adam.

So when we were all seated, the doctor opened the business of the meeting in a long and eloquent harangue, the substance of which was as follows.

First he spoke of the house and estate being the property of a master, such as there is none other; and the good man enlarged on his lord's merits, till his eyes ran over with water, and I perceived that many were touched by his ardent and heart-felt expressions of love. And next he went on to give a short outline of the history of the estate; how the people had fallen away from their first path, and sold themselves to another; and how they had been redeemed from this bondage—for which part of the speech I refer my reader to a conversation which took place between me and my uncle on my first arrival at this place.

He then proceeded to speak of the letters which the master had left behind him for the comfort and instruction of his servants, and showed how far the people had wandered from the right way, by neglecting the study of these letters; and now coming closer to the point for which this meeting had been called, he explained his motive for calling this assembly, viz. that every person there present, should be inclined to afford his assistance, either by money or personal labour, for the multiplication and dispersion

of the master's letters, in order he said, that there might not be a little child on the estate, who should be without a copy.

It appeared that this speech gave general satisfaction, for even Madame le Monde smiled, and remarked that the excellent doctor had a charming flow of eloquence, and Mistress Grace said softly, that this thing ought to have been done years ago, and that she hoped now that it would be effected without loss of time.

So the doctor stepped back, and a nephew of Mr. Fitz-Adam came forward, a smart-looking young man, and one who much favoured his uncle in the expression of his countenance and general carriage. What he said was not however greatly to the purpose, his speech running much in a complimentary strain. First he spoke of the times as being so far superior to those which were past, inasmuch as the interests of the poorest occupied the thoughts of the highest, in a degree never known before. It was a pleasure to him, he said, beyond the power of expression, (and he laid his hand upon his heart as he spoke,) to hear the cause of the children of poverty thus pleaded by wisdom and piety, (and he bowed to the doctor,) and to see beauty, (and he looked at the young ladies,) and elegance, (and his eye fell on Madame le Monde,) and erudition, (and he motioned to the librarian,) and above all, dignity and consideration in society, (and his eye rested a minute on

the chairman,) all bound together, all united, all associated in one work of love, of charity, of philanthropy; and at every separate sentence which he uttered, he raised his tone, he lifted his hand, he stamped his foot, and he went on a long time in this style, and was, I saw, much admired by many present, who evidenced their admiration by loud clappings at the close of the speech; but being myself little accustomed to hear declamations of this kind, I must own that I felt it rather a relief when his oration was concluded; however, I was afraid of expressing my opinion, lest I should betray my ignorance of what is really excellent in the art of public speaking.

The next person who came forward was the gentleman in the sad coloured suit, as plain a sort of person as I ever saw, and one of a somewhat uncouth manner. I saw at once that he was not to the taste of the young ladies, for one turned to another and said, 'Pshaw,' and the second whispered to the third, and then all three began to converse with each other in an under tone, as if they were determined to let every one see that Master Simon might speak as long as he chose, though they were not going to listen; but this gentleman's speech was much to the purpose, and exhibited a mind accustomed to business, and prompt in execution. He opened his speech by acknowledging his decided and warm approbation of the measure proposed, regretting that it

had not been thought of before, and felicitating the Doctor, whom he called his friend, in having been permitted to be the first to propose a measure which, he trusted, would be pleasing in the sight of the Master; and, having finished this part of his oration in a few plain words, not one of which could be spared, he proceeded to what he called business, and asked what was proposed as it respected the original manuscripts from which the letters were to be copied, for it seems that the language in which these letters had been first written had become obsolete.

The Doctor replied, that he proposed to form a committee to collate the oldest manuscripts, one of which it seems was in the hands of my uncle, another in that of Father Peter, and several more in different places.

The question then followed, would the Secretary join the association? and it was agreed that he should be applied to when he returned; but the Doctor being asked why he had not applied to him before he called the meeting, he seemed much embarrassed, and at length replied,—that he would rather prefer that his friend the Secretary should speak for himself, than repeat any thing what might have passed in private conversation with him. I observed an interchange of looks at that moment between the chairman and the Librarian; nevertheless, the thing passed off, and the next person who came forward was the

Librarian, and I could not help observing, that Mr. Fitz-Adam, who had hitherto sat in a sort of listless attitude, with his legs stretched out, so as to be seen by all the company, (for he prides himself on the comeliness of his legs,¹ and is thought to do so not without reason,) started up in his seat and sat bolt upright, and all attention. There were some others also in the room who seemed much excited, and I heard whisperings running along the seats occupied by the inferior servants, for the Librarian it seems is a great favourite with this class. So as I said, he got up, and stood forward on the platform, and I only wish that I could make my reader see him as he stood there, and just as he is painted on my mind's eye. The Librarian is a little man, long bodied, but uncommonly short from the waist downwards, his face and the upper part of his body being particularly long in proportion to the rest of him, and the forepart of the head, to wit, that portion in which the brains are found, being unusually low, which as I have heard those who are curious in such matters say, is no token of a strong understanding; but I myself do not presume to be a judge of these things. His features are large and ill formed, and the lines of his face uncommonly strong; yet with all this he is one whom some call

¹ "He delighteth not in the strength of the horse, he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man." Psalm cxlvii. 10.

interesting, for his eye is as sharp and piercing as that of a hawk, and he has a manner which bears down all before it, so much so, that in all the house there is only my uncle who can withstand him when he is set on any thing. But I should not forget one of his especial qualifications, which is this, that he cannot be made to blush; and this total absence of the perception of shame gives him much readiness as a public speaker, for there are, it is well known, but two sorts of men who are naturally fitted by the qualifications of their minds (I do not allude to the qualifications of a fine voice, or of a commanding presence, which some have by nature) to excel as public orators,—the man who, being entirely pleased with himself, is not liable to have his self-satisfaction disconcerted—and the man who thinks little of himself, and can plead the cause he has in hand, with little or no reference to what the world may think of him as an individual.

Well, but to return to him from whom I started. As soon as the Doctor had drawn back, he stepped forward, as I before said, and standing near the edge of the platform, he took up an eye-glass which hung suspended from his neck, and eyed the company all round, rising on his toes for the convenience of seeing some of them the better; a motion which set the young ladies to smile, for he is a particular favourite with them, and which mightily excited the disdain of some others who

sat behind them. So after having gazed his fill, for I dare say he stood there more than a minute, a long while I should think to be in such a situation, he dropped his glass, and commenced his oration as follows, just as he would have done had he been talking to a particular friend on his own hearth:—‘ My friends, and fellow-members of this household, and you my worthy brethren on the platform, must be prepared to pardon me if I utter some truths which may not be altogether agreeable to the ears of those who are in the habit of entertaining and cherishing ancient prejudices. I wish, in the first place, that you, my brethren, should thoroughly understand that I am willing and ready—nay, more than ready, anxious, most anxious, most earnestly anxious to unite in any measure which may conduce to the general good of the family, and not of the higher denomination of members only, much as I respect them, and he bowed to the chairman, but of the inferior brethren also; or rather,’ he added, ‘ of those whom ancient prejudice has hitherto branded as inferior,’—and his eye traversed the ranges of the most remote benches, and as if taking fire from the view of his friends and partizans there packed, he began to pour forth such a tirade of long unconnected phrases and high-sounding words, as I should despair of giving my readers any idea of; but I well remember some words which stood out pro-

minent from the rest of his oration, these were—*liberty, equality, brotherly love, reason, the march of intellect, the rights of man, fanaticism, tyranny, &c. &c.* and how long he might have gone on is not to be known, if his voice had not been drowned by the vehement applauses and clappings of the party chiefly addressed.

When silence was restored, and the orator, all flushed with self satisfaction, was preparing himself perhaps to renew the same strains, the voice of the chairman admonishing him not to digress from the subject in question, viz. that for which the meeting had been called, brought him down in some degree from the heights of rhodomontade into which he had soared. In consequence of which, he recommenced in a chastened tone, and with a softened expression of countenance, but one which to me was not more pleasing than that which had gone before, being of a nature which I could not comprehend. I was, however, all attention, being put even more on the alert by this hint, which in fact assisted me in discovering that which lay under a long rigmarole of flowery compliments paid to the doctor, respecting the brotherly and benevolent feelings which induced him to form the plan now in agitation for the improvement of the people, especially of those hitherto considered as inferiors. He spoke of the letters proposed to be disseminated; he acknowledged with much apparent liberality that

they contained much excellent matter on subjects of morality, that they might perhaps throw some little light on the history of the family, and that they represented the person of whom they chiefly treated in an amiable and respectable point of view; in short, that he could see no harm in permitting all the members of the family to read them. They might amuse, they might improve in some respects; they exhibited specimens of fine writing; they contained pleasing and simple descriptions of manners now changed, and modes gone by; but that, to speak with candour, he did not believe that they were altogether genuine. He had cause to think that parts of them were interpolated; and that in fact,—and he affected to hesitate and shake his wise head,—that in short, the person supposed to have written them, was just such another as themselves, and that his pretensions, or rather the pretensions made in his name, to the possession of the house and estate, was only a sort of fallacy—a contrivance to keep power in the hands of certain persons desiring to rule in his name. ‘However,’ he added, addressing the doctor, ‘you may, my excellent brother, be assured that I am ready to serve you to the utmost with my hand and heart (and the hand was laid on the heart) in this your most benevolent and well-intentioned purpose.’

The doctor and Father Peter it seemed had their mouths opened to answer him, and there

was a sort of murmur of disapprobation rising from different parts of the room ; but the very loud clappings and applauses rendered all reply impossible. And during this interval, observing several persons who were justly offended rising to leave the room, I thought that I could not do less than follow them, for in fact I begun to comprehend that my uncle had more right on his side, in his firm resolve to have nothing to do with these people, than I had hitherto thought. As I passed out, the young man Theophilus brushed by me in haste, but perceiving me, he stopped short, and asked me when I expected my uncle. I made him no answer till we were beyond the hearing of the people coming out of the doctor's house, and then I asked him wherefore he had put the question ?

‘Because,’ he replied, ‘my mind is made up to have done with them, and if your uncle will but take me into his service, I will throw aside my livery this moment, and send it back to Madame le Monde with my best compliments and thanks, leaving her to look after another servant as she pleases.’

‘You cannot make a better resolution,’ I answered, ‘and though my uncle is not at home, yet I think I can answer for him, that he will provide you with employment and welcome you to his service.’

‘Think you so?’ said the young man, ‘at any

rate I will run the chance, and there,' said he, 'goes my badge and my livery,' and he threw aside his badge. 'I will see that they are delivered to the housekeeper. As to the wages which are due to me, I will have none of them; and as you are so kind, master Nicodemus, I will bring my few possessions into your apartments presently, and take up my abode with you, if it be only in the little anteroom; for I had rather be a doorkeeper in your uncle's service, than occupy the seat of highest renown in that of Madame le Monde.'¹

'And what has brought you to this sudden resolution?' I asked.

'The thing has long been tumbling up and down in my mind, Mr. Nicodemus,' replied the young man, 'for some time, but when I heard them applaud the man who actually denied, in the face of them all, the authority of the master, why truly then, I thought it was time to be decided; and if I might be so bold, Mr. Nicodemus, I must say that I think that you do wrong to give them so much of your company.'

'Well, well,' I answered pettishly, 'I am not going amongst them any more, I have a great deal of writing to do, and I must set to work immediately.'

'Yes,' replied he, 'that is the work I desire,

¹ "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Psalm lxxxiv. 10.

and therein I should wish no better than to assist you.' So we parted, I going immediately to my room, and he promising to follow me as soon as he could free himself of the things which had been placed under his charge by his late mistress.

I was in a strange sort of humour when I found myself shut up in my room, and perhaps had I been left alone till Theophilus had arrived, I might have settled down as it were in my proper place; but as it happened, I had hardly dipped my pen into my ink to begin my writing, when comes a tap at the door, and when I had cried, Come in, who should enter but the doctor. I was surprized to see him, but he was just come from the meeting which was at that instant broken up, and he was there to ask me when I expected my uncle. As I could give him no satisfaction on that head, he fell into discourse on other things.

'Well, Mr. Nicodemus,' he said, 'and what did you think of the meeting? Is it not wonderful to see how, by a little address on my part, such discordant elements have been brought into agreement, and so many jarring wheels been made to work together to one object. This is to me a glorious day,' continued he, 'a day of rejoicing, and a token, I trust, of the speedy approach of that period when we shall all be of one mind in this house, and all be directed to seek only how to please our Master, and to walk in his ways.'

‘ But, my good sir,’ I answered, ‘ I cannot quite enter into your feelings. Surely you cannot expect to render such persons subservient to the interests of your Master, as openly deny his right of dominion ; really, I think the Librarian for instance, ought not to be depended upon ;’ such spirits as these are not likely to bend to the will of the Lord.’

‘ There spoke my old friend the Secretary, I know him again,’ replied the Doctor. ‘ My good young man, you do not understand, I see, that my spell and art subsists in using the talents of this man to my own purposes, even as it were against his own private convictions. He is a man of known ability, and a man of substance ; and I ask you why I may not use those talents, and that substance to help forward the great end I have in view ?’ And he went on a long time to shew how this might be done, and the great benefit he expected to derive from bringing all sorts of persons to work together with him in his great object ; all which might have passed better with me, had I not heard the discourse above related between Father Peter and the Steward. My reader will, perhaps, ask why I did not repeat this discourse to the Doctor ? I answer, that I had not then been brought to break entirely with the Steward and Madame le Monde, and I knew

¹ “ Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law ? ” Psalm xciv. 20.

perfectly well that if I told out what I had heard to the Doctor, it would be repeated by him to his especial followers, and so get wind; and yet I can hardly say what held me back from breaking with these people, unless it might be that I was more taken with the fascinations of the housekeeper's eldest daughter than I was even myself aware of at the time, and thus being in a sinful state of irresolution, I suffered the worthy man to talk on and say what he would, whilst I sat twisting my pen in my hand, and looking as weak as all persons do who cannot resolve to act in that way which they know to be right. Now, whilst we were thus situated,—I persisting in a silence which I knew to be sinful, and the chaplain trying to talk himself into a persuasion that he was right, when more than half apprehensive that he was wrong—who should come in but a servant in the livery of the housekeeper. This man was furnished with two small notes, sealed with wax, and bearing with them the fragrance of honey,¹ one of which he presented to me, and the other to the Doctor.

‘What is this?’ said the Chaplain ‘and from whom?’

‘From my mistress, the housekeeper,’ replied the serving man.

So we opened the notes, and found that they

¹ “It is not good to eat much honey; so for men to search their own glory is not glory.” Proverbs xxv. 27.

contained invitations couched in language the most polite, to take our supper the next evening in her room on occasion of the birth-day of Mr. Fitz-Adam, which was always a great day in the family. When we had read these billets, we looked at one another, conjecturing pretty well what was passing in each other's minds, though neither of us caring to say, on account of the presence of the servant. At length, however, the Doctor addressing the messenger, said, 'Give my best compliments to your mistress, my good young man, and tell her that Mr. Nicodemus and I will send our answers in a few minutes;' so the servant withdrew, and when he had shut the door after him, the Doctor said, 'What is to be done now, my young friend?'

'What is your opinion, sir?' I answered; thus giving question for question, a habit into which irresolute persons are almost certain to fall sooner or later.

'Why,' replied the Doctor, lowering his tone, and drawing his chair closer to mine, 'my worthy young friend, all things being considered, and the present crisis of our affairs being brought into the calculation, for now is the moment in which the compact is to be signed or broken; for I would wish you to understand, that although I have with infinite difficulty brought things to the present pass, yet, that the smallest appearance of stiffness on our part just at this time, would un-

ravel the whole clue; and, therefore,'—he added, 'but probably you already understand my meaning.'

I bowed acquiescence, although I hardly knew what would be the upshot of all these parentheses and broken sentences, and the worthy man went on, 'Thus all things being weighed and duly considered, although it is a principle of mine, drawn from my Lord's letters,¹ not to be seen in their assemblies unnecessarily, or to accommodate myself to their habits, which, as you must have observed, Mr. Nicodemus, are by no means what they should be; yet, as I was remarking before, in the present crisis, that is, the crisis to which with much labour and exertion, (though it becomes me not to speak of what I have been able to do,) I have brought the family, I am inclined to think, and no doubt you will agree with me, that upon the whole and under all circumstances,' and he was going off again into a labyrinth of sentences within sentences, which by the by, is as uncontrovertible a proof of a hesitating and doubtful state of mind, as my question in answer could possibly have been, when I cut him short by saying, 'Then upon the whole

¹ "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."—Romans xii. 1, 2.

you think that we ought to accept this invitation?’

‘I do,’ replied the Chaplain, ‘and I will give you my reasons:—this house has been for years past torn by different parties and opinions, which have greatly retarded the progress of all that is right amongst us; yet, during these scenes of perplexity, those who have truly loved the rightful master, and I am thankful to say that there always have been many such in the house, have been consoled by certain promises in the lord’s letters, stating that a time is to come, in which all that is wrong shall be set right, and in which all the members of the family shall enjoy a perfect and unbroken peace.’ These you will say, Mr. Nicodemus, are very encouraging promises, and exceedingly pleasing to such as hope to be made instruments in effecting and aproximating such a state of things, and,’ added the poor man with a slight cough, and some hesitation of manner, ‘if I have been assisted in some small degree to advance this desirable order of affairs, in the first instance by an enlarged and liberal plan, (in which I have been upheld by Mr. Fitz-Adam and the house-keeper) for the education and improvement of the children of the inferior servants, and in the establishment of several other similar institutions in

’ “And the work of righteousness shall be peace: and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.”—Isaiah xxxii. 17.

the family, of which it becomes not me to speak, and if I have, as to-day, been enabled to combine all our powers in one grand effort for the advancement of the only desirable knowledge, have I not reason to think myself most happy? And although your uncle, good man, differs totally from me in some of my views, and even goes so far as to say that I am blowing bubbles in the air, which may look gaudy in the sun-beam for an instant, and may float awhile above my head, but will all presently burst and be altogether as nothing; yet I appeal to your unsophisticated judgment, whether it is nothing to have brought the haughty Fitz-Adam, and that hitherto unbending and imperious character, the house-keeper, to give their sanction and approval to my endeavours? But,' he added 'we must not spoil our work at the moment in which we have brought it in some degree to bear. I consider this invitation as a sort of crowning peace-offering, and I rejoice Mr. Nicodemus, that you see it in the same light, and vote for this one further concession on our parts, for the good of the people.'

I stammered out my acquiescence with all he had said, in that hesitating tone in which a man, to serve his own private purposes, gives his assent to that which he knows to be false; and in consequence, we immediately set ourselves to work, to write answers to the notes of invitation, which being done, the doctor took them

to his own room, in order to seal them, and dispatch them by the hands of his own servant. He had scarcely taken his leave, when Theophilus arrived, bringing with him all that rightfully belonged to him, and being dressed in a plain suit divested of all badges and marks of his late servitude. There was a small antichamber or closet within our room which was unoccupied, I directed him to put his bed there, at least till my uncle returned; and it was not long before I had reason to rejoice that such an inmate had been added to us, for this Theophilus was a fine young man, being very intelligent, and so well acquainted with the elements of knowledge, that he was more than fit in these particulars to be my associate.

It seems that from childhood he had been in the service of Madame le Monde, and had been continually flattered with the prospect of advancement in that service; but having from time to time been visited by the Interpreter, though in a manner not understood by those who had the chief rule over him, he had, after various sinful hesitations, (to use his own words), been assisted to make the resolution which led him to throw off all dependence on his unworthy mistress, and come to us.

But it was a thorn piercing my heart, to witness the simple and strait forward manner in which this young man set himself to obey the

suggestions of the Interpreter, at the very time that I was hesitating between the right and the wrong, resolving to gratify my own evil passions at all risks. And it should be here observed as a warning to others, that the mistaken conduct of the doctor, was that which above all other things confirmed me in my evil conduct.¹

So Theophilus having arranged his goods and chattels, and made his bed in the obscure corner which I had pointed out to him, came forth into the room where I was sitting, with a countenance all gay and radiant, as it were from the effects of inward peace of mind.

It may be believed that I took good care not to speak to him of the invitation which we had just received, yet when the dinner was served up, for I had resolved to use my uncle's privilege, and to dine in my own room, I made him sit down and eat with me, and I found him to be not only an agreeable companion, but one to whom I could not help looking up, as being already delivered from that bondage of this world, in which I found myself still stricken, in spite as it were of myself. So after dinner we sat down and wrote, though I found myself very unfit for the work, and my pen accordingly went heavily; however, Theophilus having undertaken to help me, I was ashamed to give up till near sun-set, at which time we went out

¹ "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."—
Matt. x. 36.

to walk. We first took the turn towards the fields, in bye-paths where we met no one, though we heard a shepherd-boy playing on a flute; and whilst we stood listening, for the sound was very sweet, the lad laid aside his flute, and began to sing, and these were the words of his song :

The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care,
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye.

‘ That little boy is of the right sort,’ said Theophilus, ‘ he knows his own master,¹ and that is more than some of the wisest of us do, and what I for one should never have discovered, had I not been assisted so to do.’² So when we had listened a while to the boy, we passed on, and having made a turn about, found that our nearest way back to the castle, was along the street of the village, and so up through the stables and back courts.

But when we came to the village, we were surprised to find all the street up in arms as it were, with such a noise and hubbub among the men who were gathered in fours and fives at the

¹ “ The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib : but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.”—Isaiah i. 3.

² “ At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes ”—Matthew xi. 25.

doors, and such an uproar among the women, as quite filled us with astonishment, so that we said one to the other, what is all this? However, we went on, and just before the door of the inn, where the street is widest, we saw a sort of flag set up, and on the flag a motto, and this was the word written, 'Laodicea,'¹ which word, however, neither Theophilus nor I had learning enough to interpret; and before the inn, and in the yard, were crowds of men, the one half of whom were menial servants from the mansion, but in the midst of the crowd, and among the busiest of them all was mine host, and near him the man I had seen sitting at the head of the bench in the inn yard, the day I first came to the place. So the host called to Theophilus, and invited him to join the company, whilst the man whom I shall call the Elder of the Bench, not knowing his other name, extended the invitation to me. But although the housekeeper had found a bait wherewith to catch me, and had me even then at the end of her line, playing fast and loose with me at her pleasure, I was not yet so far fallen as to be caught by such people as these. And as to Theophilus, he pulled me

¹ "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."—Rev. iii. 14—16.

forward, saying, 'Give them no answer, nor have any thing to do with them.' So we walked on without seeming even to have heard them, whereupon they set up a sort of yell, and gathered round us, hemming us in, and crying out, 'These are some of them, down with them, down with them, till at length we were forced to come to a stand, I, for my part, being all in a tremble, but Theophilus firm as a rock.

Now the rabble by which we were surrounded, wore, as I plainly saw, all in their cups; and when Theophilus asked them, What ailed them that they could not let quiet persons walk through their streets without troubling them? my old acquaintance of the Bench, took upon himself to answer him, though in that confused way which persons use who are valiant from the ale cup, saying, 'The time was come in which the impositions of those who chose to call themselves great, was to be at an end, and in which those who had governed in the name of a supposed master were to be put down; 'For,' added he, 'who is that master in whose name you rule? and who has given you or any man authority to appropriate to yourselves more than another? Who has power to say that this man shall be up and another down? Who has authority to violate the rights of his fellow men? Down with them, down with them all—we will have equality and liberty. We will hear no more of the pretended

master, and the delegated authorities of old laws, and ancient regulations—confusion to them all—away with them all; we will be governed by our own wills, we will be oppressed and deceived no more:’—and then he shouted Liberty! liberty! away with the name of the Lord of this land—we will all be masters!’ And with that, the cries and shouts became such as almost deafened us; however, we made a push, and running for it, gained the gates of the avenue; nevertheless we heard voices and shouts behind us, but we made haste and got into our own room, where we shut the door, and sat down to take breath.

‘But,’ said I to Theophilus, ‘what does all this mean? what is all this confusion?’

‘’Tis but what we may expect,’ replied Theophilus, ‘from the principles which have been disseminated on the estate for months past, by the Librarian and others.’

‘I do not understand you,’ I replied.

‘Well then,’ he answered, ‘I will tell you what I know, which is no great deal, but I have had eyes and ears, and what I have seen and heard has tended not a little to make me rejoice in the deliverance which has been effected for me by the Interpreter, for I certainly never should have broken my bondage had it not been through his suggestions. As far as I can understand by putting things together, the parties in this family are running higher than ever they

did in times past, though by all accounts they have run to great excess in years gone by, as your uncle will have told you, or in these days, in addition to the old parties, viz. that in which Father Peter was the head, a party which at one time carried all before it, and the other to which your uncle belongs;¹ there are one or two more. First, there is that of the Doctor, who, well meaning man as he is, plays into the hands of the wrong side, and gives the leaders thereof many a chance for mischief, which otherwise they could not obtain; and secondly, there is a party from whom I look for all the sorrows which are coming on this house; for I verily believe that we shall have such troubles as we never had before;’ although, as your uncle says (for he has talked much with me, and his talk, though he might perhaps have thought his labour lost,² has tended much to open my eyes) these troubles will be much shorter for the sake of the chosen servants of the Lord. Now this last party,’ continued Theophilus, ‘may be in some measure called a new party; the Librarian is at the head of it, and its doctrines go right against the authority of the Master—even so far that some of them deny his very existence, some affirming

¹ “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”—Matt. xxiv. 21.

² “Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.”—Eccl. xi. 1.

that he never died, and others that he does not now exist; with much wretched stuff of the same sort,—all of which, as you see, Mr. Nicodemus, tends to the point of destroying every authority, and reducing every man to the same level. Now the Librarian has to my knowledge been disseminating this poisonous doctrine for months past, in a quiet way; but I never heard him declare his opinions so publicly as to-day; and it was, I saw, no small triumph to him and to his party, to see how well these daring sentiments were borne with, and I am much mistaken if the flame which blazed out so boldly to-day, will not burn on till it makes some of those feel who little think of it just now. You saw what was going on in the village, Mr. Nicodemus,' continued Theophilus, 'I would not answer for it that the castle itself will be quiet for many hours to come.'

'But,' said I, 'if all authorities are to be sacrificed to this new spirit, is not Mr. Fitz-Adam uneasy respecting his place? may not he be likely to be pulled down among the rest?'

Theophilus smiled, and replied: 'I see you don't understand things yet. Mr. Fitz-Adam has such a hold on the people's hearts and interests, mean the people of the wrong sort,) that come what will, he will be uppermost till the Master himself arrives and takes the government in his own hands, and this he knows full well. Nay, the letters (as I have heard your uncle say) might

be brought to prove that no one can shake the empire of Fitz-Adam till the Lord himself shall come, and Madame le Monde will rule as long as he does ; they stand and they will fall together, and this they know ; therefore they have nothing to dread but the return of the Lord, hence their rage against your uncle who looks with a longing and anxious eye for that event which alone can terminate their reign.'

I was, as my reader may suppose, put into a sort of brown study by this discourse : I saw every moment more and more clearly that all my uncle had said was right, that it was my duty and interest to keep clear of the steward and the house-keeper, and the daughters of this latter ; but then on the other hand, I felt myself drawn into their circle by a power which I could not resist, and yet I had not strength even to wish that I might be delivered ; in consequence of which I was extremely unhappy, though I endeavoured not to betray my uneasiness to my companion. So we lighted candles, for it was getting dark, and sat down to supper. Falling again into conversation, as is natural to those whose minds are full, and who find their affairs and principles in an unsettled state, though by the by I should say that I was the only one of the two whose principles were unsettled, for as to Theophilus, it seems that he had made up his mind to go straight forwards in the right road, that is, as far as he could see

and understand. So, as I say, we sat talking, Theophilus opening his heart to the very bottom, and I guarding mine as it were, lest he should see that in it which I did not wish him to discover, and the time was wearing away towards midnight, when my companion suddenly as it were pricking up his ears, said, 'Did you not hear that! Mr. Nicodemus?'

'What!' said I, 'what is it?'

'Listen,' he replied, 'listen!' and surely enough, I heard a sort of rushing sound, resembling as I thought the boiling of the ocean¹ when the waves are pressed forwards against the rocks by the tempest.

'What may that be?' I asked.

'What is it!' he replied, 'but that the people are up—this is what I expected, though perhaps not so soon.' And we arose from our seats, and stood as it were prepared to be on the alert in any way which we might think best. I am sure that we stood in that position four or five minutes, during which the murmur became more and more distinct, and to carry on our allusion, we could now hear the voices of the mariners who rode upon the storm, for the shouts of the populace were distinctly heard rising above the tread of many heavy footsteps.

¹ "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."—Isaiah lvii. 29, 31.

‘They are numerous,’ said Theophilus, ‘the village is up I doubt not, and the inferior servants who lodge without have already joined them.’

‘What is their object?’ asked I.

‘Ask the sea,’ he replied, ‘what it would have when it tosses its troubled waves on high.’

‘But, Mr. Fitz-Adam,’ I said, ‘what will he do in this emergency?’

‘Do!’ replied Theophilus, ‘let him alone for an emergency of this kind; probably he will turn his coat, and rush in with the rabble, and so become the conductor to lead them to execute his own work; and to-morrow, if I am not mistaken, he will turn about again, and put the foremost of those in the stocks who this night will have been the instruments of mischief in his own hands. Mr. Fitz-Adam, indeed! do not trouble yourself about him; if he does not make all this accrue to what he considers his own advantage and that of the Master, whom he serves, I am mistaken in my man. Nay, I have a pretty shrewd guess, respecting the parties against which he will direct the storm.’

‘And which may they be?’ I asked.

‘Who should they be,’ replied Theophilus, ‘but those who stand most in his own way, and those especially to whom he carries the fairest face, I mean the doctor, with whom to my certain knowledge he begins to be heartily tired; but’ added he, ‘why are we standing here? Is this a

time to be deliberating and parlying amongst ourselves if it is as I expect? Let us hasten to the doctor, we might serve him in his perils.' With that we both looked about us, and seeing a number of strong oaken staves belonging to my uncle, we each seized one, and were scarcely thus provided, when we heard a crash, as of the breaking open of a door, and then another and another, and then such yells and shrieks and shouts burst forth, as caused the very inner walls of our apartments to ring again. 'They are within the house,' cried Theophilus, 'let us seek the doctor,' and he sprang through the door way, whilst I followed him, but through the darkness and intricacies of the passages lost sight of him in a moment, yet being directed by the roars of the mob, I sprang forward, and soon found myself at the entrance of the great hall; and surely such a sight as met my eyes there could never be forgotten! There was a mad and drunken populace, consisting of men, women, and boys, all without order and discipline, and without other objects than mischief and confusion; and they were pushing forward at the moment when I first saw them, crying, 'Down! down! down with them all! we will have nothing—no ruler—no prince;' and to this they added scurrilous expressions, such as I will not sully my pages withal; when suddenly, as it were springing up in the midst of them, appeared a tall portly figure, clad as they were, and

crying, 'Come on! follow on my boys! here we march, here we go, to destruction! destruction of the tyrants! and so joining, first with the people, and then as it were leading the war song, he passed on, whilst the foolish and infuriated populace pursued fast on his heels, adopting him whom they knew not, as a leader, at the very moment in which they were uttering the cry of 'We will have no prince—down with all authorities!

That this person was Mr. Fitz-Adam himself, I could not doubt, though he was all changed to his outward appearance: neither could I help admiring the firmness and presence of mind with which he thus turned the flood from his own party and particular friends, though my admiration was mingled with horror and apprehension of what was to ensue. So we led on, and the people followed, and I stood observing until the last of the herd had passed down towards those parts of the house which were occupied by Father Peter, and which, although communicated by passages with the housekeeper's and steward's room, were capable of being barricaded from them. In following in the rear of the rabble, I therefore speedily entered the precincts of the Father, and saw the mob before me through the long vistas of the cloistered walks, and heard their yells as they ran along under the arched roofs, rousing the hooded owls and bats, and other unclean birds, which had long kept undisturbed dominion of

their murky secret haunts in the old building, and causing many of the servants and followers of the Father to run and hide themselves, trembling even for their lives. The time had been when the Father at the head of his bands would have driven back ten, nay an hundred times the number of persons who then were attacking him, but as I have before said, the Father is not now what he once was—his power is on the wane; though as it took a long time to reach its height, so as I have heard my uncle say it may probably take as long a period to sink into total decay. So as the Father did not feel himself strong enough to oppose the enemy which poured in upon him like a flood, and as the most staunch of his followers seemed to be seized with an astonishment¹ which rendered them incapable of lifting a finger in his defence, the rabble were left to work their will through all his apartments;² and bad work did

¹ "And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning; standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come." Rev. xviii. 9, 10.

² "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Rev. xvii. 15—18.

they make—hauling and pulling every thing about, breaking and destroying them with a terrible noise and clatter, till at length he that had made himself their leader called them off in another direction, and then I was reminded of what Theophilus had said, viz. that he had some fears lest a part of the tide of the popular fury might be directed against the doctor. I then did what I should have done before, and made my way to the chaplain's apartments, leaving the main mass of the rioters behind me. These, as I afterwards learnt, when they had for a while exercised their blind rage on the Father, were conducted by the man who had made himself their leader through several dark passages, till he got them fairly without the castle gates, when he caused a door to be closed upon them, and so they were left without to congratulate each other on their mighty exploits, viz. the destruction of dried owls and ravens; for although some of them had laid hands on certain of the more valuable possessions of the Father, it seems that they had not contrived to bring any of these away with them, although the person thus despoiled, viz. the Father Peter himself, never again got hold of any of these articles. But there was still a part of the rabble within the house; and when I reached the Doctor's apartment, I found several young men who were attached to the Chaplain, with Theophilus at the head of them, defending the door

against a dozen or more of the rioters, which last were alleging with much clamour, that they would have a touch at the Doctor, because he was akin to Father Peter; a charge which by the by, the Chaplain had brought upon himself, by a foolish assertion which he was over fond of making, viz. that he was of the same lineage with Father Peter, and that in fact he drew his principal privileges as chaplain of the family from him. Now, mine was but a single arm,¹ however, I began to lay about me, and that so determinately on the backs of the rabble, that every blow I gave told to the full; and so what with fore-strokes and backstrokes, the enemy lost heart, and took to his heels, escaping by windows and chimnies, so that in a short time, only two or three of the number remained, these being too drunk to run; and then, when thus all was in a manner quiet, up comes Mr. Fitz-Adam, dressed as usual, and as if he had just been roused from a quiet seat by his own fire side, calling order and crying shame, expressing his hopes that the Doctor, who now appeared at his door with some others who had taken refuge in his room, was not hurt; ordering,

¹ "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up! For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."—Deut. xxxii. 29—31.

that lint and bandages might be applied to the broken heads of Theophilus and the other young men, and finishing off by commanding that the two or three poor fellows who had been caught, should be put in the stocks all night, and soundly flogged in the morning. Thus terminated this uproar, every one returning to his place, and all being as hushed and quiet when we rose the next morning, as if nothing had happened more than common during the night; though no doubt there were many of us far from easy in our minds; amongst whom were the Doctor; Father Peter, whose apartment had been one of the chief seats of the uproar; the poor creatures in the stocks, who were as the scape graces of the rabble; and myself, who, though I had seen so plainly all the manoeuvres of Mr. Fitz-Adam the last night, could not bring my mind to give up those pleasures which I hoped to enjoy through keeping in favour with him and the housekeeper. Now this day happened to be a day always much to be observed in the household, being set apart to do honour to Mr. Fitz-Adam, and in the morning soon after I had breakfasted, the Chaplain came to express his gratitude to me and to Theophilus for our gallant defence of him the night past, though as I told him, I could take but little credit for what had been done by myself. We then as was natural, fell into discourse on the state of affairs in the family; and the Doctor asked my

opinion of all I had seen and heard, and of the strange spirit evinced by the people on the late occasion.

‘Why,’ replied I, ‘that there are many ill-conditioned people on the estate, and indeed in the castle itself is but too apparent.’

The Doctor agreed with me, but remarked that he thought that Mr. Fitz-Adam had acted in a very proper manner, in making an example of the poor fellows who had been caught, adding, ‘and I trust that all these misguided persons will be the better for the warning, and that henceforth we shall not be subjected to such invasions of our peace, as we experienced last night; and yet, Mr. Nicodemus,’ he remarked, ‘there is some comfort to be derived even from these present trials; inasmuch as our Master tells us in his letters, that these things are to be the forerunners of that blessed period so much to be desired by all those who pray for the coming of that better order of things, and to which we trust the labours of the faithful servants of the Lord are rapidly tending; and when these evils are past, my young friends,’ continued the chaplain, ‘we may trust that the seed which we have sowed, will spring up a hundredfold. I am by no means disheartened by these signs of the times, and I think that these little interruptions should not turn us from our purpose; which is the advancement of our Master’s kingdom, through the instrumentality of his

servants. We ought always to remember, that we should keep alive feelings of charity for our fellow men, even for those who are not of our way of thinking; and therefore in pursuance of our plan, I am of opinion that what happened last night should not induce us to break our engagement with Madame le Monde this evening.' I saw Theophilus look up as the Doctor said these last words, but he did not speak.

'I wish,' said I to the Doctor, 'that you would state your opinions at large on these subjects to my companion, that he may be enabled to approve of what I shall do this evening.'

'You are not accountable to me, Mr. Nicodemus,' remarked Theophilus, 'for what you think right to do:—if you are persuaded in your own mind, that it is right and proper to associate with those who are avowed enemies of your master, surely you cannot require the approbation of your servant to confirm you in your opinion.'

'You are severe, Theophilus,' I replied,

'I beg pardon if I am so,' returned the young man, 'but I know but too well, from painful experience, how impossible it is to mix in the assemblies of the housekeeper, and to wait on the person of Mr. Fitz-Adam, either as a servant or as a guest, without falling into that which is offensive in the eyes of the best of masters, to be

able to hide my opinions from those whom I love and honour.'

'But for peace sake, my noble Theophilus,' said the doctor, 'I call you noble indeed, as it regards your conduct towards me last night; but for peace sake ought we not to risk something? What does our master say in his letters? "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye?" And again, "Do good, seek peace, and pursue it:" and in another passage, "Blessed are the peace-makers:—"

'But,' returned Theophilus, 'does he not also say, "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable." He does not say, first peaceable and then pure:—and again, do we not find this passage in his letters, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate;"

'But you know the object which I have in view, Theophilus,' returned the doctor, 'which is that I hope and trust, with the assistance of some others of the faithful servants of the master, to establish a new order of things, and one which I trust will be altogether agreeable in the eyes of our blessed Lord.' In reply to this, Theophilus took up the argument almost in the way which I thought my uncle would have done, had he been present; showing how it was stated in the Lord's letters, that his people would be as wandering and scattered sheep till his return;¹ and that he,

¹ "And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd:

when he came, would search them out,¹ and establish his dominion over them, and be their prince,² and be unto them a source of unnumbered blessings, and a sure protection from every evil ;³ adding, that he will then break his enemies to pieces with a rod of iron ; with many

and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill : yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them."—Ezekiel xxxiv. 5, 6.

¹ "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered ; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be : there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God."—Ezekiel xxxiv. 12—14.

² "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick : but I will destroy the fat and the strong ; I will feed them with judgment. And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God ; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats."—Ezekiel xxxiv. 16, 17.

³ "And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them ; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more."—Ezekiel xxxiv. 27—29.

other promises of the same description,¹ all of which tend to show that the deliverance of the people is not to be effected by any other hand than his own. Neither the doctor nor I were at that time prepared to admit what Theophilus said, we were therefore more disposed to be irritated than influenced by his reasonings; and I verily believe, that, had not the chaplain felt himself in some degree under obligations to him for his admirable conduct during the riot, he would have told him in so many words, that he thought it very arrogant in such a young man as he was, to be arguing with a person of his experience and dignity in the family on subjects of this kind. However, he restrained himself, although evidently discontented, and soon afterwards took his leave, having appointed to meet me at the hour fixed in the note, in the apartment of Madame le Monde, finishing his address in these words; ‘and there, my dear Mr. Nicodemus, I trust that we shall have strength given us to stand up for the honour of our Lord, in the presence of his enemies. When the doctor had shut the door, ‘Shall I tell you, Mr. Nicodemus,’ said Theophilus, ‘where the error of the doctor lies?’

‘I think you have hitherto been forward enough,’ I replied somewhat peevishly, ‘in endeavouring to make both me and the chaplain

¹ “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”—Psalm ii. 9.

acquainted with our mistakes, and your own superior knowledge and wisdom; but you may say what you please, only be brief, for I have much to do before evening.'

'Well then,' replied Theophilus calmly, 'his error lies in this, as I have often heard your uncle say, that he believes that he is to do something towards building up his master's authority in the estate; whereas, the master has said repeatedly in his letters, that things will remain as they are, until he himself comes to set all right, and that until then, his people will be as sheep, wandering on the dark hills of this earth, among wolves and wild beasts, and again that we are to be as the beautiful stones of a temple scattered in the dust, till he shall come to put us together. Nevertheless, the good doctor is persuaded that he, and others of his own way of thinking, are to be chief shepherds and master builders.'¹

'Well, Theophilus,' I replied, 'I am not altogether assured, after all, that the chaplain may not be quite as right as those who say that the lord is to come himself to settle his own affairs. In the first place, as my uncle tells me, and as I find in my lord's letters, the present state of the

¹ "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is in vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep." Psalm cxxvii. 1, 2.

master, that is his present situation being in the royal court, of which they say he occupies the principal seat¹ it would be indulging low thoughts of him, to suppose that he should condescend to come into such a place as this, and to dwell with such as we; although I can well understand how, after a time, he should so far bethink himself of his own, as to give them power and authority to rule in his name, to redress all grievances, and to set all things in the right order. All this I can understand, and see the reason of, but I cannot at all comprehend wherefore you should expect a consummation so far above all experience, or all rational hope, as that of the return of the Lord, to live with us.'

'Merely,' replied Theophilus, 'because the Lord has said it.' The young man then turned to a portion of the letters which he had before him for the purpose of copying them, and showed me various passages, which, because I think they might be somewhat long to bring forwards in this place, I shall introduce at full length in a note.² Well, it

¹ "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Ephesians i. 21, 22.

² "In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee

seemed that the more Theophilus and I discussed, the further we were apart; in consequence of which, we both, as if by agreement, relapsed into silence until it was time for me to get ready to fulfil my engagement, which being done, without saying another word to Theophilus I left the room, and went to seek the doctor, whom I found in his best wig and as spruce as might be, though his raised colour and somewhat agitated manner did not imply that peaceful state of mind which those enjoy who are assured that they are in the way of duty. However I took no notice of these symptoms, though I thoroughly comprehended them, but taking his arm, we made the best of our way to the housekeeper's room, where coming in as we did from obscure passages, we were dazzled with the blaze of many lights; for Madame le Monde has a great notion, when she

from the sheepecote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, and as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies, also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever." 2 Samuel vii. 7—13.

gives an entertainment, of doing every thing in the handsomest way. The supper table was laid all through the middle of the room, spread with the finest drapery,¹ with silver, and glass, and fine china, and other elegancies for the table, of which she has store under lock and key; and round the fire place, where was a glowing fire I promise you,² sate all the company, the names of whom I need not repeat, being such as I have mentioned many times before. The principal persons were Mr. Fitz-Adam himself, bravely accoutered, the Librarian, and poor Father Peter, though this last looked somewhat down in the mouth, by reason no doubt, of the damage done the night before to his curiosities, which, as he took occasion to say, would take him years to set right again. There were also the three young ladies, daughters of the housekeeper, and some others, so that the company was very large; but I saw not Miss Grace, for she is no favourite in the housekeeper's room, and probably would not have come if she had been invited. The reception which was given to my companion by the elder lady, and to me by the younger ones, was very encouraging, and we were handed to two of the best seats in the

¹ "Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail; blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee."—Ezekiel xxvii. 7.

² "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them."—Isaiah v. 11.

room. Mr. Fitz-Adam speaking jocularly with the doctor because we were late, hinted in a way which I thought not over genteel, that he wondered one who had so rare a relish for the good things of the housekeeper's room, should have kept the supper waiting at least a quarter of an hour. This jest being lightly passed over by the doctor, who was for enduring all things for the sake of peace, the librarian took it up, and carried it as far as it would go, lugging the poor Father into the scrape, and saying that the chaplains of the household had always been remarkable for their relish for good dishes ; but the servants coming in with the supper, the subject was dropped, and we all took our places.

Now the cook, it seems, had done her very best, and every thing was set out in the nicest order. I am not indeed particularly addicted to the pleasures of the table, yet I felt my mouth water as I looked at the dainties, and I observed that the doctor had some sympathy with them also, though he was careful to say nothing even in a complimentary way to the housekeeper, on the occasion of the sumptuous treat which she had provided, fearing, perhaps, a renewal of the jest ; so as I said, we were all seated, Mr. Fitz-Adam with his napkin tucked into a button-hole in his waistcoat, and Madame le Monde being set fairly to, to give her guests the morsels they liked best ; and every one was as it were giving himself up

to enjoyment, when the steward addressing the librarian in a sort of jocular tone, said: 'Well, Mr. Librarian, what do you think?'

'I have many thoughts,' replied the librarian, 'but I cannot say which of my thoughts might just now be most acceptable to the present company.'

'Well,' replied the steward, 'then I have a droll circumstance to relate: I was in the village this morning to talk with some of the leaders of the riots last night, being anxious to learn in an amicable way what it was they had to complain of, for you know, doctor,' he added, turning to the person addressed, 'that if a thing of this kind can be terminated in a friendly manner, it is always best.'

'And always most pleasing to our Lord,' replied the doctor, boldly.

'True,' said Mr. Fitz-Adam, 'true, doctor, and acting upon this principle, I met the parties pretending to be aggrieved, as I tell you, this morning, and we settled every thing very pleasantly on my granting them a whimsical concession, on which however, they insisted as on a matter of life and death.'

'And what might that be?' asked the doctor.

'I suppose,' returned the steward, 'that it is not necessary to inform you, or any person here present, that all the public documents of the estate, viz. bonds, leases, re-leases, settlements,

&c. &c. are required to be signed by me'—'and this was once required to be done by me also,' remarked the father;—'and that,' continued the steward, without paying any attention to Father Peter's observation, 'they always ran to this effect, viz. Adam Fitz-Adam, by the favour of the Lord,' steward of this estate.'

'I know it,' replied the doctor.

'Well,' returned Mr. Fitz-Adam, 'what think you these foolish fellows have insisted upon?'

'I can make no conjecture,' replied the doctor.

'Why,' resumed the steward, 'neither more nor less than this, that in all our future documents we should omit these words, *by the favour of the Lord*, and introduce these, *by the favour of the people.*'¹

¹ "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."—Rom. xiii. 1-7.

² "And upon a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.

‘Impossible!’ exclaimed the doctor, dropping his knife and fork.

‘Impossible!’ cried Father Peter.

‘Very possible, and very certain,’ rejoined Mr. Fitz-Adam, ‘and more than this, I have been obliged to yield to the torrent of popular opinion, and to give way.’

‘Then I say,’ said the doctor,—but he was interrupted by the Librarian, who called for a toast to be generally drunk to the health of Adam Fitz-Adam, ‘By the favour of the people—steward of the household.’—The young ladies filled my cup, and Madame le Monde that of the chaplain, whilst I gathering consternation from the deadly pallor of the Doctor’s countenance, felt that I dared not lift the glass to my lips. Nevertheless, the toast went round with loud and repeated cheers, for the very ladies seemed to be so carried away by their enthusiasm (which was all against the rightful Lord) that they laid aside the manners fit for females, (which manners, no doubt, were never otherwise than assumed by them) and were nearly as vehement in their expressions of applause and approbation as the men themselves; and moreover when the toast had gone round with three-times-three, then they would have the harper in, for we have a harper in the castle—a

And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.”—Acts xii. 21—23.

blind one too—and certain other musicians on the strength of the household, and they were directed to play and sing, and we had several airs and songs whilst we were finishing our supper, all of them bearing some sort of allusion to the great Fitz-Adam, as they chose to call the steward, the friend and beloved of the people.¹

Now I saw all this while that the poor Doctor was in two minds whether he should not get up and be off—but because he was not compelled to drink the toast, and because Madame le Monde laid her hand upon his arm whenever she saw him about to move, and dropped some of her bonied words into his ears, he kept his seat; and thus they carried their point as far as it would bear, for that time, that is, they kept him in the company, and made it appear in the eyes of others of the household, that he gave his countenance to all that was passing in the apartment: while, as I afterwards found, those that were without were fully acquainted with all that was going on within, not excepting that daring proposition which I have mentioned above, viz. the putting out the name of the Lord from the papers and authoritative documents belonging to the estate. So, as I said, the poor Doctor did not stir, though he looked this way and that way, as if he could

¹ "And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord; neither consider the operation of his hands."—Isaiah v. 12.

have sunk into the earth, and as for myself, I was as unable to move as he was, for I had got close to the housekeeper's eldest daughter, and was as one bound in chains; I had no more strength in me than one dead, and so the time passed on. But as we were at our desert, the table being spread with every species of comfiture and sweetmeats prepared by the hand of the housekeeper, (who, by the by, is very expert in compounding things sweet to the palate,) and the company just filling their glasses again, the sound of the harp and viol being at that minute very loud,¹ suddenly two or three of the servants from without put their heads in at the door, all as it were in a terror and alarm, and looking more like corpses rising from the grave than living men. We all looked that way, our eyes being guided by that of the Doctor, who was the first to see them, and the musicians at the same time, after having played some jarring notes, all at once coming to a stand.

‘What do you want there,’ said the Steward, who by this time was warm with wine and good

¹ “Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem: and the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines drank in them. They drank wine and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.”—Dan. v. 1, 3—5.

cheer, 'what do you come here for, troubling our pleasure? Away with you.'

'Speak,' said one of the servants, pushing another forward; 'speak, and tell him; speak for the life of you'—and the man's teeth chattered frightfully.

'Begone,' said Mr. Fitz-Adam, 'and don't be troubling me now;' and he struck the table, and muttered words which I will not repeat.

'Oh! sir;' was the answer, 'help, help, or we are lost.'

The Steward spoke again, and louder, and more fiercely; bidding them begone, and adding some furious threats—on which, as if with a great effort to bring out that which was almost too terrible to utter, the foremost came out with these words.

'Sir, there is a sound in the mountains,' I did not at first take in the words of the man, and therefore was the more amazed at the effect this awful intelligence had on the company.

Mr. Fitz-Adam turned like a stone,¹—horror and amazement seemed to fix his features, as if struck by death. Madame le Monde fell into a fainting fit,² of such sort as one would have sup-

¹ "But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone."—1 Sam. xxv. 37.

² "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof:

posed she never could have recovered from. I looked from her to her eldest daughter, and started with a feeling of loathing, such as I could hardly have imagined a moment before, at the effect which this strange communication had produced in her appearance.¹ I had never before suspected that her cheeks were loaded with artificial colours; but now that a deadly pallor had spread itself over her features, and the cold sweat was oozing from every pore, then I saw that she, whom I had hitherto thought a blooming beauty, was only a painted and made up Jezebel, and an object fit only to excite loathing and abhorrence.² But I had no time to think of these things. The Librarian, who alone seemed able to speak or ask for farther information, was questioning the servants, and with that air of incredulity which I have always observed in him on any serious occasion.

‘Well, my brave fellows,’ he said, ‘and what is this noise like, which seems to have put you into so much consternation? Do explain it for the good of the company.’

but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”—1 John ii. 16, 17.

¹ “Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.”—2 Sam. xiii. 15.

² “And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”—Isaiah lxvi. 24.

But I have no patience to repeat the words of this man, they are not fit to be put down on paper; neither did I stay to listen to any more that passed—but seeing the Doctor rise to go out, I followed him, leaving the miserable company, of which I had so lately made a part, to make what they could of what had terrified them past all I had ever witnessed before, or could have conceived; and being on the threshold, I said to the Doctor, ‘What is this? What has alarmed them all so much?’

‘Do not say them,’ replied the Doctor, ‘do not blame these miserable ones only; are we not more to be condemned than they are? And am not I more sinful than you are young man? Ought I not to have been in a state to have rejoiced when any tidings, however remote, of the coming of our Lord came to my ears? “Blessed is that servant who shall be found watching when his Lord comes.” But, what have we been doing? How have we spent this night? What were the motives which induced us to sit by and hear the authority of our Lord called in question?’ And the poor man wrung his hands, and fairly burst into a flood of tears, ‘crying, Lord, Lord, I have sinned against thy dominion, and against thee, and I am not worthy to be called thy servant.’¹

We were in the great hall, into which there is a

¹ “And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.”—Luke xv. 19.

passage from that hateful room in which we had supped, and though the Chaplain had not remarked it, (not that I believe he would have cared if at that moment all the assembled world had witnessed his humiliation,) the apartment was full of servants, some standing in attitudes of terror and amazement, and looking as if they would have been glad if the mountains could have fallen on them and hidden them for ever,¹ and others eagerly gathering to the windows, and others exclaiming as if in solemn joy, 'Well, be it so—come Master, come; come and fulfil our hopes, our longing desires; come Lord, come quickly.'² Still I was, as it were, partly in the dark, not exactly knowing what all this meant; so loosing the arm of the Doctor, whose agony of tears seemed rather to augment than to diminish, I questioned one and another of those who were terrified: but for a long time could get no answer from which I could make anything out; till at length, seeing her whom they call Grace, and seeing that she was much in her usual frame, at least more so than many others, I put the question to her respecting this general disturbance.

'Follow me,' said she, and she led me out upon the platform before the chief door of the house. It was a night in which both moon and

¹ "Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us."—Luke xxiii. 30.

² "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—Rev. xxii. 30.

stars looked dim; ¹ neither was the air in motion:— it was indeed a night of awful stillness, excepting from the cries of those within the house, and these cries were mixed, some being those of distress, and some those of gladness. And she bade me look eastward towards the hills which I have spoken of before; and there I saw, as it were, flickerings of light, ² just above where the outlines of the mountains marked the sky; and she bade me listen, and then I heard, though low, and as very far off, a sound of beating, as of the beating of hoofs of brass and iron on a hollow pavement.³

‘Do you hear it, she asked?’

‘I do, I replied.’

‘We have heard it some hours, whilst you were at your impious regale,’ she said. ‘Did you think that the Master would suffer his authority to be wholly despised? Could you suppose that he would not visit for this?’ and she looked me hard in the face.

‘What are these awful sounds?’ I asked.

‘These are the signs,’ she replied, ‘by which those who desire his appearance, and those too

¹ “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark.”—Zech. xiv. 6.

² “For as the lighning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”—Matt. xxiv. 27.

³ “At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong horses, at the rushing of his chariots, and at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers shall not look back to their children for feebleness of hands.”—Jer. xlvi. 3.

who dread his appearance, might be warned of his approach; ¹ nevertheless, these last will not take warning. True it is, that they are now alarmed,—that they are terrified for the moment, but if space be given them, they will turn back to their offences, as a dog to his vomit; and when the Master comes, he will find these faithless ones eating and drinking, and following their own pleasures, as if no warning had been given them: ² but are not even now the rushing of his chariot wheels heard in the mountains? and yet, who amongst them will take the warning? ³

‘Some will, I trust,’ I replied, for in truth I felt myself, as I listened to the awful sounds, and saw the sparks struck, as I supposed, by the feet of the horses flashing in the air, such a feeling of terror as made me fall down upon my knees, praying that I might be forgiven for all the negligences and gross offences of which I had been guilty in my service of this great Lord. And I felt especially cut to the heart, to think of my ingratitude

¹ “As a dog returneth to his vomit; so a fool returneth to his folly.”—Prov. xxvi. 11.

² “I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”—Luke xviii. 8.

“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.”—Luke xvii. 26, 27.

³ “For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.”—Isaiah lxvi. 15.

to the Lord,¹ who had called me into his service when I knew him not, and had prepared such a friend for me in my uncle, and had made every thing so easy to me here, and had assured me of such promotion hereafter, and that not from any service I ever did, or ever could do for him;² and when I thought too of his excellent merit, and all he had suffered for us, I was cut, I must say, yea, to the very heart, to the very joints and marrow, and like the poor Doctor, began to weep and cry as if my head had been a fountain of water.³ And to be sure, the sight was awful—and such as no one could look on without trouble. It seemed, as it were, as if the eastern horizon were all on fire, and there were sounds in the mountains distinct from that which we first heard,

¹ "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."—Zech. xii. 10.

² "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Titus iii. 5.

³ "That all flesh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath: it shall not return any more. Sigh, therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes. And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the Lord God."—Ezek. xxi. 5—7.

which we could not comprehend; nay, indeed, we could not comprehend any thing of all this, nevertheless, these sounds were as of heavy substances rolling down with a rumbling, unearthly sound, and dreadful crashes. What these were we understood in the morning, though we could make nothing of them in the night; they were the snows of the mountains, which being uplifted or shaken in their beds, came tumbling down in mighty avalanches into the vale below.¹ But as I said, we could make nothing that night of these tremendous sounds, which gave us the notion of the dissolution of the globe itself; and for my part whenever these sounds occurred, I was like one ready to expire,² and my eyes and heart seemed to fail me on witnessing these things. However Mr. Fitz-Adam it seems, being stirred up by the Librarian, had in the mean time (that is, whilst I was standing without looking towards the hills) roused himself from his state of despair, (for I can compare the condition in which I had last seen him to nothing but despair,) and calling up that which alone can make an individual exert himself under the pressure of that most intolerable of all feelings in which hope never comes, viz.—malice,—(for as the

¹ "The mountains melted from before the Lord, even that Sinai from before the Lord God of Israel."—Judges v. 5.

² "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."—Luke xxi. 26.

steward confessed to Father Peter, he hates the Lord, he hates his people, he hates his government, he hates his very merits,) he set himself forthwith to work and to strive, if he must needs yield at the coming of the Lord, to do as much mischief as in him lay, to the Lord's party in the meantime, and to hold out as long as might be at all risks and at all hazards. Neither was he single and alone in this feeling, for all his party, though without hope of final success, (for they well knew that every thing in the end was to be put under the dominion of the Lord), upheld and strengthened him in his determination to resist to the last, rousing him to speedy action, and taunting him with the horror and affright which he had betrayed on the first news of the sound heard in the mountains. So he roused and shook himself, as a tyrant waking from his wine; and going forth, being accompanied by the librarian, who was also striving to confirm himself in that in which he had endeavoured through all his life to persuade others, to wit,—that the Lord existed only in the imaginations of his followers, and that therefore all the phenomena which had alarmed the house might be traced to natural causes,—he, that is Mr. Fitz-Adam, came into the hall, his

¹ "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."—Heb. ii. 8.

partisans crowding behind him, and ranging themselves about him on the dais. And there, being set, he issued his commands, that all the people of the household should present themselves before him. And it was at this call that I returned into the hall, which was now in fact to be the council¹ chamber of the family; and here it was presently seen of what stuff our rulers were made, as it also appeared how in this solemn assembly the servants of the Lord seemed as silly sheep without a shepherd. It was a solemn scene, and a solemn night:—there stood the enemies of the Lord in the place of authority at the upper end of the chamber, and at the other end by the doctor, like frightened deer gathering by the leader of the herd, stood many of those who had been accustomed to range themselves with this well-intentioned but somewhat weak servant of the great Master. These were all pale and trembling, some of them being in tears, and others tearing from their dresses those ornaments and badges of distinction with which they had formerly loved to decorate themselves,² and to count as the rewards and tokens of

¹ "They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent; they are confederate against thee."—Psalm lxxxiii. 3—5.

² "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, has taken us away."—Isa. lxiv. 6.

their good conduct. Again, in a darker corner of the hall, stood the Father with his followers; most of whom being provided with some symbol, or image, or picture of the Lord, were kissing them, and pressing them to their hearts, with various strange contortions, and exclamations of which I could make nothing. And finally, there was another party, in the midst of which stood Theophilus and the female called Grace;¹ and on the countenances of these, as the lamp which hung in the centre of the hall shone upon their faces, was an expression of composure, nay of holy joy, which embellished their features, and rendered them almost as Gods,² mingled in the assemblies of men;³ for these are those blessed servants of the household, who having been brought to cast aside all their own merits, have confided only in those of him who bought them; and who having built their house upon a rock, are not frightened when the rains come, and the winds beat upon their house.³ All these

¹ "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."—Rev. vi. 9.

² "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4.

³ "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."—Matt. vii. 24, 25.

last were however ranged on one side, as far from Mr. Fitz-Adam and his party as the space would permit; but between these various parties was a mixed mob (for the very villagers were gathered into the hall) which seemed to gape, and wonder, and tremble, as if not knowing what to think, or which side to take. And Mr. Fitz-Adam had called for the watchmen, for we have many watchmen whose business it should be to watch around the house at night, men of nerve and strength, and each of them having armour to defend the house on occasion, so these stood in the centre of the hall before the dais: and these were the first whom the Steward addressed, demanding of them wherefore they had not given notice when the alarm had been first heard. To this some of them doggedly answered that they had heard no alarm, neither before time or now, and that they verily believed that the horses and appearances of which some spoke, were but the roaring of the winds in the mountains, and the flashings of the northern lights; and others could only give such an account of themselves as proved that they had either been asleep or in their cups; whilst a third sort were dumb, as if terrified and conscience struck because when the Master was expected they had not been found watching; for the Lord when he left his people had given especial charge to the watchmen, bidding them to observe the signs of the heavens, and to take

especial care of the castle during the night.¹ But it was not now the time for Mr. Fitz-Adam to be breeding dissensions and exciting angry feelings among the guard; so he soothed and commended them, and addressed them much to the following effect,—

‘My worthy and excellent guards and defenders,’ ‘inasmuch as we find it written in the Lord’s letters (mind he could call the Master Lord to serve his turn²) that in the latter days many shall come in his name, and shew signs and wonders if possible to deceive his most faithful servants,³ it behoves us who dwell in his house, and are the stewards of his property, and

¹ “Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon the land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: if, when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning, his blood shall be upon him: but he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.”—Ezek. xxxiii. 2–7.

² “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”—Matt. vii. 21.

³ “For false christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.”—Mark xiii. 22.

the guardians of his beloved people, to act with the utmost caution, and to keep our house as strong men armed, lest we should admit an enemy instead of our rightful Prince; therefore whilst this alarm continues, I command that every door and window shall be closed, and that arms be prepared, and every means of defence provided, and moreover, should any one appear before the castle gates and demand admittance, that no door shall be opened until I, Adam Fitz-Adam, shall give permission.'

So the watchmen were commanded to their posts, and every entrance barred; and we who were known, or even suspected to be on the Lord's side, were driven to our places, being bid to hold our peace, and keep our own thoughts to ourselves. So when all was shut up, there was a dread silence in the house, and no voice heard but that of the owl in the turret. So Theophilus and I withdrew to our apartments, and there to our joy and delight, whom should we find but my uncle, just come in; for the watchmen had let him pass at the moment of the closing of the doors.— I never was better pleased in my life than in seeing this my valued friend and protector, and I ran to him, and fell into his arms, confessing all the offences of which I had been guilty since he had left us. The good old man embraced me with tears in his eyes, crying, "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found."

Nevertheless, when I said, 'Now, uncle, that you are returned, I feel assured that all will be well with me,' he reproved me, saying,

'What! Nicodemus, do you embrace one error as soon as you have been brought to forsake another? Whence has arisen all the infidelity of the Master's servants in this house, but because they "hew unto them broken cisterns, and forsake the fountain of living waters," because they make unto themselves masters of their fellow-servants, and thus bring clouds between themselves and the Sun of Righteousness. What! I ask you, in this hour of terror, what have availed the counsels and support of one fellow-servant to another? What, I ask you, were the Doctor or Father Peter able to do for their followers this night? Who was able this night to lift up his head, and look towards the hills with hope and joy, besides those whose trust was in the Master only, and who built their confidence on his merits only, to the utter rejection of their own pretensions.'¹

We then sat down, and fell into discourse on the prodigies observed that night, and we would know of my uncle what they meant, for we had listened attentively, and it had seemed to us that the noise in the mountains had ceased.

'Do you believe,' I asked, 'that the Master is really coming?'

¹ "Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."—Jer. xvii. 5.

‘Of that day, and of that hour in which he will actually come, no man knows,’ replied my uncle; ‘his coming is compared in his letters to that of a thief in the night; nevertheless, there will be certain signs given to his servants, which will forerun his appearance, and this which we have witnessed this night, is one of these.’

We then asked my uncle respecting these signs, and forthwith he took down a volume of the letters, and pointed them out to us, which, because the quotations are somewhat large, they shall be given in a note;¹ so when he had recited these at large, he fell into a sort of discourse which soothed my mind in a manner I cannot describe; this discourse ran chiefly on the character of the Master, and of the King his father, (for the Master is a prince, and the chief of princes) and of the Interpreter; and I would know of him something respecting the king—and because my uncle was

¹ “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days shall be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth, behold he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.”—Matt. xxiv. 21—28.

always cautious of not speaking his own words when treating of these high matters, he referred me to those passages of the letters which explain them,¹ and behold whilst he was yet speaking, one entered whose entrance I did not understand,² nor whose manner of speaking I could not describe, but he, viz. this person whom I presume not to speak of, blessed me and Theophilus in a most solemn manner, pouring on our heads a most fragrant ointment, which filled the whole room with its odour; and behold, whilst we yet wondered, it seemed that my uncle only was present with us, but we were so filled with joy, that we were almost ready to cry, 'let us arise, and be gone to meet the Lord in the hills,' forgetting that for the present we were as prisoners³ in the house;

¹ "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."—1 John v. 7.

"I and my Father are one."—John x. 30.

"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."—John v. 37.

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13.

"Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."—1 Peter i. 2.

² "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John iii. 8.

³ "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee."—Zech. ix. 12.

however, we all fell on our knees, and cried, 'come quickly, Lord, come quickly.' So passed the remainder of that night, but towards morning we got some sleep, the flesh being fatigued with all which it had gone through.¹ Now, when I awoke in the morning, and was dressed, I went out into the room where we took our meals and usually sat, and there were Theophilus and my uncle, and the windows were open, and every thing appeared as usual, only that I felt that some great change had passed in my own mind,² for I felt as it were quite a loathing and abhorrence of the very thoughts of those things which, but the day before, had been most sweet to me. So when we had bid each other good day, my uncle led me to a window which opens towards the mountains, and he asked me if I observed any change wrought in the night.

I replied,—'All things seem as they were, the sun shines as brightly, the dew spangles the herb, the storm is past, I see no sign whatever of that which alarmed us last night, excepting,' I added, 'certain streaks and channels wrought in the sides of the mountains.'

'Those,' said my uncle, 'should prove to us, that what alarmed the Master's enemies was not

¹ "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."—Matt. xxvi. 41.

² "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
—2 Cor. v. 17.

imaginary; those treasures of the snow which have been heaped up upon the mountains from the beginning of time, will melt and flow at the approach of the Lord, descending into the vallies for the fertilization of some, and tumbling in beautiful avalanches for the destruction of others.¹ Hence, these breakings forth and disruptions of the snow are certain tokens that the coming of the Lord is not far off; neither should I be surprised, if other effects of that which was exhibited last night, presently appear, approaching us from the east. Oh that our fellow-servants would take warning, and be advised, that they would repent whilst it is day, and before the night come, when no man can work.² But come,' he added, 'let us refresh ourselves with the necessary aliments which the Lord has provided, and then to our work, for the time is short.' But whilst we were at our breakfast, there was a gentle tap at the door, and on my uncle bidding the person to come in, using his accustomed phrase of invitation, as given before, in came the doctor—but oh, how changed, how contrite was the poor man, and how cordially did he run into the arms of my uncle.'

' Oh, my brother, my friend,' he exclaimed,

¹ "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?"—Job xxxviii. 22.

² "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work."—John ix. 4.

‘you were right, right from the beginning, and I was wrong ;—Did I think, poor weak pragmatistical self-conceited wretch that I am, that by any devices I could imagine, or any efforts I could make, I could overreach the enemy of my lord, and triumph over Madame le Monde and Fitz-Adam,—that I could bind these unicorns in the furrow? ¹ Is the devil, the world, and the flesh; to be thus manacled and shackled by an arm like mine? Oh! blessed Lord, forgive me this sinful thought, from henceforth and for ever may I give all the glory to thee, and to thee only:’ and the poor man wept, and my uncle consoled him from his lord’s letters, assuring him, that since no servant had ever been brought by his own reasoning, to give the whole and sole glory to the lord, he that had been enabled to learn this excellent lesson, had already been written in the master’s roll, of the blessed of the household, and would assuredly be preserved in the day of affliction. ²

‘Alas!’ replied the Doctor, ‘could I but think so, I should indeed be at ease, but when I look back on the whole course of my service, and on my impious expectations, I dare not hope.’

‘Nor will you ever hope, till you cease to look at yourself, and your own short coming,’ said my

¹ “Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the vallies after thee?”—Job xxxix. 10.

² “And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is heaven.”—Matt. vi. 17.

uncle, 'Do you believe and admit, in their full extent, the words of my lord's letters?'

'I thought I did believe once,' replied the doctor, 'and then I counted myself among the faithful, but I now see, I never had faith; I took not the word in its simple meaning; I held back a portion of the truth, as unprofitable to my fellow-servants, and I set up my own opinion in opposition to that of my lord; and that, because I secretly delighted in the favour of the house-keeper, and the velvet chair in the hall.'

'But now,' said my uncle, 'what are your feelings and opinions?'

'That I am a miserable sinner,' replied the doctor, 'and that my heaviest offence is, that I have kept back the truth from the people;' and the poor man wrung his hands.

'And what is the truth,' asked my uncle.

'That our master is all in all, and that we are nothing,'¹ returned the doctor.

'Go then,' said my uncle, 'my beloved friend, call your people together, and declare your error; lose not a moment, the time is short. Do this at the present moment, this is what you owe to those you have misled.'

'But if they will not hear,' said the doctor: 'yet you are right again, my friend, and I am

¹ "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."—Col. ii. 10.

again wrong,' and forthwith he hastened to do that which had been pointed out to him.¹

So we were again left, and my uncle called us to our desks, having adopted Theophilus as an assistant, and thanking his master for having given him such an one. In the mean time, it seems that all recollection of the last night's alarm had passed away from the minds of the enemies of the lord, with the darkness of the night, and that every thing was going on with them in the usual way; for we heard the voices of the people as they passed to and fro along the passages and under the windows, calling to their fellows, and bidding them prepare and make ready for a great feast which was to take place that day, in honour of the steward, who had been re-elected as it were to rule in the name of the people; and we heard one tell another of the mighty doings which were to be, and how that the villagers were to be feasted in the square.

'Did I not tell you so,' said my uncle, 'what can be done for these people?' And he arose and went out among them, and I doubt not but that he spoke all that was in his mind; nevertheless the terrors of the last night were not wholly

¹ "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?"—Joel ii. 17.

without their effect on many individuals. There were some in the house, and these, in some instances, such as might be least expected, who seemed to be much and deeply impressed by them. The doctor had said that he feared that few would attend to him should he attempt to collect a congregation to hear the recantation of his errors; but herein he was much mistaken, for he had scarcely opened the door of his chapel, than many crowded in and hearkened even with tears, confessing their own unfaithfulness, and exclaiming that they threw themselves without condition on the mercy of the Lord. The doctor also was much surprized to see Father Peter's people come to him also, throwing down their images and symbols,¹ and asking for copies of the Master's letters, so that the stir was great, and many were that day added to the Lord's followers. But the noon of that day, a day ever to be remembered by us, was scarcely arrived, when the sun, which had shone out in the morning, became as it were all darkened, as if under an eclipse, and the birds in the turrets began a screeching cry of a very doleful kind; on which, all they who were abroad in the fields ran back to the house, and the steward himself, who was busy with the house-keeper settling some arrangements for the feast,

¹ "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats."—Isa. ii. 20.

put every thing by to inquire what might be the matter. The watchman on the roof of the house at the same time gave an alarm, on which many of us ran up on the leads. Theophilus and my uncle and I were some of the latest to hear the alarm; accordingly when we were got upon the leads we saw Mr. Fitz-Adam with a spy-glass in his hand looking towards the east; and we heard one say to another, that the watchman had seen people running towards the castle as if in terror of pursuit.

‘What can this be?’ asked my uncle. So we listened to what Mr. Fitz-Adam should say when he had looked that way with the glass, and we heard him say to the librarian, who stood by him, ‘It is true enough, they are running for their lives; and lo, behold one and another drops from among them as if without life.’ So the librarian took a look through the glass and shook his head. But when my uncle asked him to lend him the glass for an instant, he put it quietly into his pocket, saying it was of no use to help the sight, and then having whispered something in the ear of Mr. Fitz-Adam, the latter in a thundering tone issued his orders, as he had done the night before, that every door and window of the house, especially towards the east, should be carefully closed and barred, and that every watchman should be at his station.

‘What can this mean?’ said Theophilus.

It will appear presently,' replied my uncle, 'but be not afraid; he assured that if it is a messenger of the Lord who frightens them, he comes on an errand of love to those who trust in him.'¹

Now whilst my uncle spake, many of those who were followers of Mr. Fitz-Adam had gone off with him, and there were but few left in that place. So there we stood, and anon in the direction the watchman pointed out, we saw people running. They were country people, and they came from those parts of the estate lying nearest the hills; however we saw them not with the naked eye many moments before we discerned that behind them which was the cause of their terror, and truly the sight was enough to appal the stoutest heart. It was a chariot drawn by pale horses, and his name that sat in the chariot was death; he was armed with arrows, for he was an archer, and he was terrible to look upon;²—and this frightful apparition approached the castle, yet not swiftly; but as with measured steps the archer bent his bow, and from time to time he sent forth an arrow, which strik-

¹ "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day."—Psalm xci. 5.

² "And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."—Rev. vi. 2, 8.

ing one and another of those who fled before him, struck the individual to the ground, for the arrow was sure, each one had its mark, and none fell harmless; nevertheless, it seemed that the stroke was not always mortal, for some few arose, and fled, having torn the arrow from the wound. All this could be seen from the place where we stood, for the progress of the chariot, as I before said, was measured and slow: yet its approach was certain. In the meantime the work of defence and of offence was going on in the castle; every door and window was blocked, and several guns which were upon the roof and in other places, were brought to bear upon the enemy. Never having witnessed anything of the kind before, I sprang some inches high when the first guns went off, and I saw the balls whizzing through the air, right in the direction of the enemy; but although they seemed as it were to pierce the very bodies of the pale steeds, yet they winced not, nor changed a foot, nor did the archer even start in his seat.

‘I know,’ said my uncle, ‘whence this messenger comes, and I also know that no weapon formed against him will prosper.’ It seemed that the defenders of the castle were soon convinced of this, for we heard no more guns, but were admonished by some who wished us well, to come down into the house, into a place where we might be secure from the arrows.’

‘Be it so,’ replied my uncle calmly, ‘we will act as friends advise, but we are equally safe in this place as in any other, and therefore should not desire to move, unless we could be of service, and this will appear anon.’ So we stepped off the leads down into the interior chambers, and seeing the door of the Doctor’s apartment open, we went in; here we found this venerable servant of the Lord employed as he should be, consoling and strengthening the faith of certain persons, of whom the present state of affairs seemed to have shaken their confidence in the Lord’s kindness; or rather of persons, who in looking to themselves, seemed as if they could not understand how they could ever be counted worthy of that kindness, for it was seen very clearly at this time, that no one could bear these trials who did not look from themselves to the high price which the Lord had paid for our redemption. However, we were surprised to see how the tongue of the Doctor was loosed, and how earnestly and decidedly he applied the words of consolation to those who were feeble in spirit. But, whilst thus engaged in this inner chamber, we were made sensible that the attack upon the house itself was actually commenced, for the cries of the wounded ran along the galleries, and we heard the footsteps of those who were bearing away the wounded, whilst others were heard running in various directions, exclaiming, ‘Where can we be safe? Where shall we

find a refuge? Help, help, or we are lost.' It was then that the Doctor and my uncle, rushing forth into the place in which the arrows fell thickest, (for neither walls, nor bars, nor any other defence, seemed to avail the least to keep them off,) set themselves to point out, that now, even in this perilous moment, it might not be too late to seek that mercy which could render these barbed arrows but messengers of love. And whilst Theophilus and I were endeavouring to give what assistance might be in our power, either in succouring, and consoling, and assisting those who were wounded, and yet not so severely, but that the arrow might be extricated; and whilst the servants of the castle were throwing out the bodies of those who were past hope, for it was impossible, nay, and contrary to the laws of the household, to keep those within the walls who were struck in any way past recovery by a messenger from the Lord;¹ two arrows came as it were at one and the same time. They were particularly sharp, and they bore on each a motto, and the words were these, as I observed them afterwards, viz. I have loved thee to the end;—and at the moment that one of them pierced to the heart of my uncle, the other at the same time buried its barbed head in the breast of the Chaplain. I was near my venerable parent when this

¹ "He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more."—Job vii. 10.

happened, and received him falling in my arms—He lifted up his eyes and said, ‘ Dear Master, I come—and when I am gone accept the services of my nephew ;’—and he blessed me, and whilst his blessings still hung on his lips, he was torn from me, for so the stern ordinances of the house demanded, and he was gathered up with others into the chariot, and I saw him no more. And as it had been with me as regarded my uncle, so was it with Theophilus as touching the Doctor ; and for a while we were like persons stupified and heedless of all that befel those around us—nay, whilst the arrows continued to fly around us the whole household seemed to be confounded, and nothing was heard but lamentations and cries, excepting it might be among those who were enabled to see as it were beyond this veil of sorrow, into the clear light of a glorious day very near at hand.

At length, however, the scourge was withdrawn—the quiver of the pestilence was exhausted—those who had fallen by the arrows, were seen no more—the stains of blood were washed from the floors, and the seats which were emptied were filled again. Where the Doctor once stood, there stands Theophilus, and I am in my uncle’s seat. May we both be enabled to fill our places as those should do who are daily looking and longing for the return of the Master. Father Peter is getting weaker and losing influence from

day to day; Mr. Fitz-Adam is unchanged; Madame le Monde is revived; the servants of the Lord are overpowered and driven into corners by the opposite party as afore time; and the Librarian at the right hand of the Steward on the dais in the hall, boasts how he predicted that the alarms described in the former part of our history would terminate in nothing, and that the return of a pretended Lord was but an old woman's tale, calculated to frighten froward children.

And here I close my history, having brought it down to the present hour; and if it seems to be broken off abruptly, let my reader understand that it is an allegory, in which every man is concerned;—that it includes much awful instruction; and that its termination, as it affects my reader individually, depends on this, viz. whether he is a follower of the world and a servant of the old Adam, or whether he is one of those who long and look for the return of the only true Lord—“For the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever;” and it is his will “that we should believe in the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.”

THE END.

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